

77-27
v. Last

OBSERVATIONS
ON
THE NIGHT THOUGHTS
OF
DR. YOUNG;
WITH
OCCASIONAL REMARKS
ON
THE BEAUTIES OF
POETICAL COMPOSITION.

The Poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,
Doth glance from Heaven, to Earth, from Earth, to Heaven.

SHAKESPEAR.

How rich ! how poor ! how abject ! how august ! YOUNG.

BY COURTNEY MELMOTH.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR RICHARDSON AND URQUHART,
AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

M.DCC.LXXVI.

ERRATA.

- Page 10. *for veihcles, read vehicles.*
14. *for aparations, read apparitions.*
20. *for wonderfully managed, read wonderfully well managed.*
26. *for thoe, read thee.*
47. *for a ring of changes, read ringing the changes.*
47. *for however but can happen, read however can happen.*
48. *for good God, read good Gods.*
60. *for days, read day.*
65. *for uferers, read usurers.*
132. *for Æquore, read Æquora.*



BY COURTESY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

PRINTED FOR H. CHARPSON AND SONS, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

MDCCLXXVI.

TO
Mrs. MONTAGU.

Madam,

AMONG the many sensible strictures which have been made, of late years, on our best English Poets, it would be as impertinent, to intrude the following sheets, as it would be to affect to shelter them under the patronage of the Author of, the *most* distinguished of those happy illustrations, “Observations on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear.”

This, Madam, is by no means my intention, unless there should be merit enough, in these juvenile reflections, to render them insensibly worthy your distinguishing approbation.

I am, Madam,

Your obliged,

Humble servant,

COURTNEY MELMOTH.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF KING CHARLES THE FIRST

IN THE YEAR 1649

BY JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME THE FIRST

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is said of Shakespear, by one of his most celebrated Editors, that, he who tries to recommend him by select quotations, will succeed like the Pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his house to sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen.

Perhaps, the reverse of this may be observed of the well known work, which is the object of the following sheets; since it is from the beauty of particular passages, and the splendor of select sentiments only, that the poetical reader can hope to derive any high degree of satisfaction. The book is much read, much
cen-

censured, and much applauded; but I believe, either way, with little delicacy of discrimination.

It may be deemed arrogant, indeed, in so young a writer, to set up for a critic; especially if we reflect on the following remark of Pope, on the writers of his times,—

Some have for wits, at first, then poets past,
Turn'd critics next, then prov'd plain fools, at last.

That I may not, at least, be thought to proceed in that regular gradation, I must beg leave to declare to those gentlemen, the hypercritics, that the following observations were actually written some years ago to a friend, whose similarity of age, and perhaps, congeniality of sentiments, have induced him to prevail on me to publish them.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE I.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE FIRST.

EPISTLE I

CRITIQUE

NOTES

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[2]

EPISTLES

TO

A STUDENT, &c.

EPISTLE I.

*Of Dr. YOUNG's GENIUS, and the DESIGN
of these EPISTLES.*

MY DEAR ARCHIBALD,

THE rapid progress you are making
in classical knowledge, and the very
early taste you discover for polite science,
induced me, both as your friend and rela-
tion (now, that you are well read, in what
are called the learned languages) to re-
commend to your notice some of our cele-

B

brated

brated Englishmen. I have already transmitted to you the works of some, particularly those of Milton, Spencer, Shakespear, and Pope ; and have taken care to purchase such editions as were the likely the better to illustrate, and the more endear them to you. I have occasionally accompanied them with a few hints of my own : and have the pleasure to find, you ingeniously improve upon me. I am now sitting down to a new task, from which, if you derive proportionate instruction, my reward will be to the very top of my wishes, for indeed Archibald, I am warmly interested in your welfare ; and from the cultivation of talents, which, in a few years cannot fail, but by your own fault, to figure, I have the greatest hope. Without more exordium, I am this moment with *The Night Thoughts* in my left hand, and I hold the pen in my right, with a resolution to point out the most striking beauties, and defects, in that celebrated Poem. Nor can I help expressing surprise, as (to use his own words) I enter
the

the *Temple of my Theme*, that, in this age of criticism and commentary, so remarkable a work hath escaped Annotation. The more especially, as no composition can be more favourable to literary scrutiny; nor any, boast a greater number of readers. Many indeed *read* who do not *admire* it; and perhaps, more *affect* to admire, who little *understand* it. There are few (indeed I know not *any* production) more unequally written: nor is there, probably, in the world of letters, a greater mixture of bad and of good. There are some, who speak of this work with enthusiasm; others, deem it beneath observation. From these vague extremes, however, let us, my dear Archibald, descend fairly into particulars, and, depend upon it, we shall find much to displease, and much to delight: nor can we fail to be agreeably paid, upon the whole, for reading him with an occasional note of illustration.

First, a word or two of our author, in general.

The genius of *Young* was strongly, and originally marked. You will be able to discover little or no simplicity, either in his Prose or Poetry; yet both have uncommon energy, as to language, and vast reach, as to conception. There is indeed, more appearance of labour in him than in Thomson; and the reader is frequently tempted to exclaim, *hic labor, hoc opus est*: but in real truth, this is nature, and not affectation. I dare say, he could no more have equalled the Pastorals of Shenstone, than Shenstone could have equalled the Ethics of Night Thoughts. I have sometimes imagined it possible to trace a resemblance, betwixt Dr. Young's Poetry, and Dr. Johnson's Prose, I mean as to the *characteristic* of each; the same solid, serious, and forcible manner of expressing, reflections, equally pious and poetical, (for the prose of the Rambler is unmeasured poetry) distinguish both.

both. There is a nerve in their writings, which gives them in *strength*, what they may be thought to require in *harmony*; and if the one appears destitute of the ease of Addison, or the other of the smoothness of Pope, there are not wanting many, who think this deficiency compensated by superior *power*. I, however, am biased neither by partiality nor prejudice—He was indeed a favourite author from my childhood: I still think him, * *by parts*, an ornament to this country; and I will do my best, that you may distinguish, in what he excelled, and in what he failed; for there, perhaps, never was a writer, whose reputation suffered more by considering him in the gross, and few who may boast a more splendid character by selection of particular passages. I in-

B 3

vite

* The author of the Notes to the Earl of Roscommon's Translation of Horace's Art of Poetry, says,—a Poet, if all the other parts of his Poem be fine, will be an ill Poet if he offends against simplicity, &c.

See the Comment on

Quam pravo vivere Naso.—

But this is contradicted by various experience. Not to step out of our own language, Thomson and Young are almost utterly destitute of simplicity, and yet are by no means ill Poets.

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vite the favour then of your attention on this occasion, and with this first letter, send you the Poem itself, in a pocket volume, begging you to turn to every reference, and give me, from time to time, your opinion of my comments.

I am,

My dear Archibald,

Your's truly,

EPISTLE

E P I S T L E II.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T T H E F I R S T.

YOU are to observe, in the first place, that the present object of our criticism, is a Poem of *Morality*, containing no great variety of character, or chain of heroic events. It differs, as the author says, from the common mode of Poetry; which is from long narrations, to draw short morals: here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the *Morality* arising from it, makes the bulk of the Poem. In consequence of this, our remarks must be chiefly confined to the sentiment, language, and argument: and these will furnish a copious field of criticism. The *incidents*, upon which the performance is built, are extremely few,

interesting, and pathetic. Dr. Young, in a very short space of time, sustained the loss of no less than three dear relations; two of these, are lamented under the names of Philander and Narcissa; and the other is supposed to be his Lady, all of whom died, nearly together. In pouring out the effusions of his heart, he is naturally led into the most serious reflections, and takes occasion, in the course of them, to address himself to a young man of libertine principles, and immoral conduct, whom he calls LORENZO, and who, indeed, is said to be a part of his own family. The scene is all along in a country church yard, and the author, may very properly be supposed to be writing his *Thoughts* upon this solemn subject, on * one of those tombstones which cover the ashes of some person whose departure he mourns.

In the *opening* of the Poem, there is a singular felicity : you shall judge for yourself :

Fir'd

* See the Frontispiece to the Octavo Edition.

Tir'd Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep!
 He, like the world, his *ready* visit pays
 Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes;
 Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
 And lights on lids unfully'd with a tear.

Night 1st.

'Twas perfectly proper to begin with a sort of reproaching address to the power which denied the repose, that would at least have suspended his agony. The notion of sleep lighting on lids unfulled with a tear, is very pretty; and yet, even in the setting out, the characteristic error of our author is conspicuous. These very lines, pleasing as they are, too often repeat the same image. Observe,

balmy sleep!

He, like the world, his ready visit pays
 Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes.

Here the thought is compleated; but go on, and you will be convinced, it is twice echoed again:

Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
 And lights on lids unfully'd with a tear.

Let

Let us *analise* the passage. Sleep forsakes the wretched, flies swiftly from woe, and lights on lids unfullied with a tear. That is, his ready visit pays, where Fortune smiles. Thus you see the image is the *same*, and by changing the mode of expressing it, *five* lines are given, where *two* might have done better. This is a common fault in Young, but not peculiar to him only: Our best writers are frequently guilty of it. For instance,

In that soft season, when descending showers
 Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flowers.
 When op'ning buds salute the welcome day,
 And earth relenting feels the genial ray.

POPE'S Temple of Fame.

To call forth the greens, to wake the *rising* flowers, and to open the buds, is at best only a pretty founding tautology. It is the observation of a very eminent Divine and Critick, that conciseness of thought, and simplicity of expression, are at the same time the best instruments, and the best vehicles of truth. How much

much more agreeable is a passage without any of that luxuriance, or amplification, of which we are complaining. For example: Shakespear speaking of this very subject, says

— the *innocent* sleep;

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of *care*,

* The *death* of each day's life: Sore *labour's* bath,

Balm of hurt *minds*, great Nature's second course,

Chief *nourisher* in life's feast.

MACBETH.

In these four lines you observe great variety. Every sentence not only *changes* the compliment, but *exalts it*; and the *thought*, so far from being repeated, is express'd in two or three words. Transpose the passage; ¹ Sleep knits up the sleeve of *care*, ² 'tis the birth of each day's life, ³ the bath of labour, ⁴ the balm of the *wounded mind*, ⁵ the second course of Nature, ⁶ and the principal *nourisher*, in the feast of life. How is the richness of a writer's genius discovered by such instances? and how
much

* Dr. Johnson says the reading should be, the birth of each day's life.

much more agreeable to a reader of fine taste, than tedious iteration, however flowery or splendid ! But to go on :

Dr. Young very soon displays to us his beauties and blemishes : The first night presents remarkable instances of both. One of the most difficult things to use with propriety in composition is *Metaphor* : It is become indeed so much in vogue, that our *ordinary conversations* are chiefly metaphoric. The poem in question is too much crouded with it. Let us see what *proof* is to be gathered from Night the First.

I.

I wake, emerging from a *sea* of dreams
Tumultuous ; where my *wreck'd* desponding thought,
From *wave* to *wave* of fanfy'd misery,
At random drove, her *helm* of reason lost,

II.

II.

How was my heart incruſted by the world !
 How like a *worm* was I wrapt round and round
 In *ſilken* thought, which *reptile* fancy ſpun ;
 Till *darken'd* *reaſon* lay quite clouded o'er
 With ſoft conceit of endless comfort *here*,
 Nor yet put forth *her wings* to reach the ſkies.

III.

— How I dreamt

Of ſtable pleaſures on the *toſſing wave*?
 Eternal *ſunſhine* in the ſtorms of life ?
 How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
 With gorgeous *tapeſtries* of pictur'd joys ?

IV.

How *widow'd* ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy !
 — Thought too buſy for my peace !
 Strays, and meets the Ghoſts
 Of my departed joys :
 Sweet comfort's blaſted *clusters* I lament.

Now without commenting on the propriety of theſe, I ſhall obſerve, that were they ever ſo exact, they come *too thick* upon us ; and as we read the book together, you will perceive theſe kind of figures ſo
 nume-

numerous, that no excellence can possibly atone for them. At the same time I confine not this fault to our author, altho' he may commit it more frequently than most others. 'Tis a very general error amongst the most eminent writers. A second error, obvious in our Poet, is the too frequent repetition of the same *sentiment*: Of the iteration of *images* we have already spoken; sameness of *senti-ment* is now the object of our enquiry. Speaking of the earth, he says,

This is the *desart*, this the *solitude*:

This is creation's *melancholy vault*,

The *vale funereal*, the sad *Cypress gloom*;

The land of *aparitions*; empty *shades*!

All, all on earth is *shadow*. *

Again,

This is the *bud of being*, the *dim dawn*,

The *twilight* of our day.

— Man,

* Is not a *desart*, a *solitude*? A *melancholy vault*, a *vale funereal*? The land of *apparitions*, the land of empty *shades*? What then shall we call this wanton use of words, but studied prolixity, or else, the effervescence of uncorrected imagination?

— Man, fool Man !

Here *buries* all his thoughts,
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.

— How I dreamt

Of joys perpetual, in perpetual change ?
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave ?
Eternal Sunshine in the storms of life ?

Here, though the expression is varied,
the sentiment remains the same.

Once more :

Here teems with *revolutions* every hour ;
Each moment
Sheds sad *viciſſitude* on all beneath.

As you go on, these quotations will induce you to read cautiously, and then you may detect the rest : From the whole, you may deduce this observation, that it is generally wrong in a writer, whether of prose or of poesy, to tire out sense, by sporting with sounds ; and that, when once an
image

image is *well* and *clearly* exprest, 'tis an unnecessary redundance, to multiply the expression.

I am, &c.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE III.

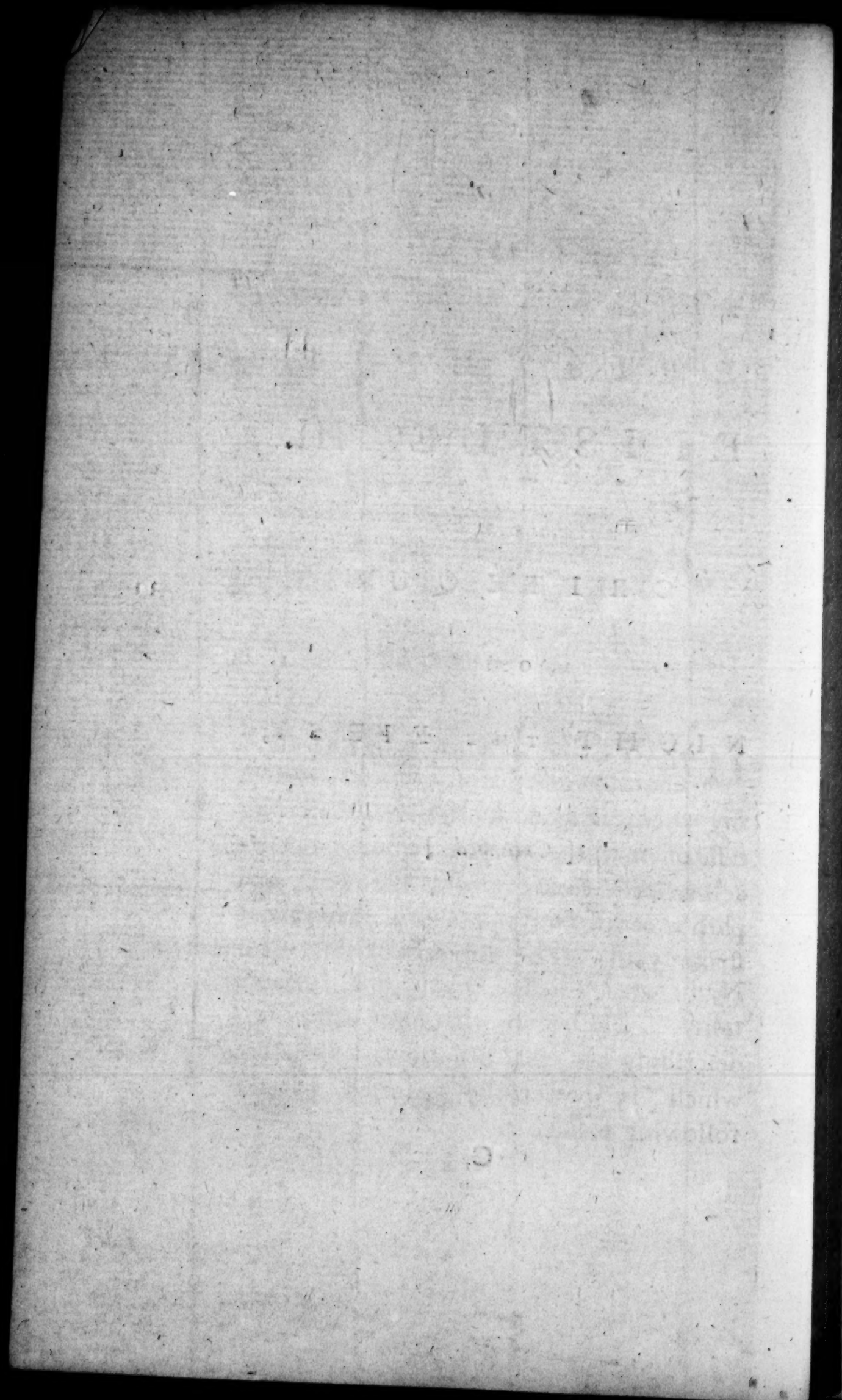
CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE FIRST,

[*Continued.*]

C



[19]

E P I S T L E III.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T T H E F I R S T ,

[*Continued.*]

HAVING shewn some of Dr. Young's characteristic defects, I now come, my young friend, to the more pleasing task of marking to you some of his excellencies. Among *these*, the piety, and pathos of his sentiments, will particularly strike you. The subjects of his First Night are, " Life, Death, and Immortality." He begins with some reflections describing his own situation ; a situation which is powerfully painted in the following passage :

C 2

The

The *day's* too short for my distress ; and *night*,
Even in the *Zenith* of her dark domain,
Is *sunshine*, to the colour of my fate.

'Tis carried still farther when he says,
Fate ! drop the curtain ; I can lose *no more*.

There is a very fine solemnity, as well
as peculiar propriety, in his invocation to
the Deity.

O *thou*, whose word from solid *darkness* struck
That spark, the sun ; strike wisdom from my soul ;
My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest. *

The comparison of the miser secretly,
and softly, visiting his hoard, is on *this*
occasion extremely apposite ; nor is its
conciseness less worthy our encomium : A
long simile, if not wonderfully managed,
is intolerable. Examples of this in their
places.

That

* But there is a farther beauty in these lines : The repetition of the
words *strike* and *soul*, has a good effect.

—— From darkness struck
The spark the sun, *strike* wisdom from my soul
My soul, &c.

That Young, possess a bold and lively imagination, notwithstanding a certain gloominess in his thinking and reasoning, is apparent in many parts of his works. His arguments for the soul's immortality from dreams, have fine fancy : You will see the *Poet* through the whole description. Take notice of the Italics.

While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spread,
 What, tho' my soul *phantastic measures* trod
 O'er *fairy fields* ; or mourn'd along the gloom
 Of *pathless woods* ; or down the craggy steep
 Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled *pool* ;
 Or scal'd *the cliff* ; or danc'd on *hollow winds*,
 With antic shapes, *wild natives of the brain* ?
 Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature
 Of subtler essence than the trodden clod ;
 Active, aërial, tow'ring, unconfin'd,
 Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
 Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul immortal :
 E'en silent nightproclaims eternal day.

In these lines there is not only fancy in the figure, but judgment in the selection of them, and none of the images are repeated ; the vagaries of sleep are naturally

described : In the argument indeed there is, no *novelty*, it having been used by a number of writers, though by none, that I can remember, more poetically.

Methinks the couplet immediately following, which closes the passage, is a little puerile, and might as well have been spared.

For human weal, Heav'n husbands all events ;
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Besides that I dislike the play upon the word *vain*, I think the sense would have finished much better as the period stands in the first quotation. The art of knowing *how*, and *when* to make a full stop, is not of less consequence in composition than in reading. In young writers, a "period of a mile" is not uncommon ; for a juvenile genius, like an unbroke courser, is difficult to check. But in authors of *experience*, in writers grown grey in the service of the Muses, this eccentricity is the more inexcusable ; and yet,

we

we shall find, my dear Archibald, that no *stripling* was ever wilder or more injudicious, in this respect, than our celebrated Author.

To go no farther for proof than the page preceding the last quotation : If you read his reflections on the mixt nature of man, beginning at

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,

And go on to the end of the paragraph, you will see a sentiment spun out to four and twenty lines, that would very fairly (and I believe, more forcibly) have been comprized in at least half the number ; if I were with you, and a pencil in my hand, methinks I could tell you *how*. But let us turn again to the bright side of the work.

The apostrophe to Death in the 8th page, (small edition) deserves your particular observation, as it is a short, and affecting address ;

Death ! great proprietor of all ! 'tis thine
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
 The sun himself by thy permission shines ;
 And, one day, thou shalt *pluck him from his sphere.*

This is bold colouring ; the rest of the passage respects the particular condition of the Author himself ; after which he addresses the Moon, which he poetically supposes to sympathize with him, but the period *ends* with an affected obscurity.

O Cynthia ! why so pale ? Dost thou lament
 Thy wretched neighbour ? grieve to see thy wheel
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life ?

So far, the sense is sufficiently obvious, but read what follows :

How wanes my borrow'd bliss ! from Fortune's smile,
 Precarious courtesy ! not Virtue's sure,
 Self-given, solar, ray of sound delight.

I have observed the punctuation, but can make nothing of it without alteration. 'Tis arrant nonsense as it is now stopped. I submit the following amendment to you.

How

How wanes my borrowed bliss *from* fortune's smile.

Precarious courtesy ! not virtue's sure,

Self-given, solar ray, of sound delight.

The meaning must be, how wanes that bliss which I have borrowed from the smile of fortune, whose courtesy is as precarious as the lustre of the moon-beam : But this is not to be wondered at, since 'twas to fortune I trusted, and not to that sunshine of the breast, which is productive of sound delight, and derived from the self-given gratulations of conscious virtue. The allusion to Cynthia you see is still kept up, with very little propriety indeed, and the whole passage is unworthy the Author. Here then, Archibald, (as your inclination urges you to composition) let me advise you, above all other points, to study *perspicuity*; to express yourself naturally, without the *appearance at least*, of laborious affectation; * a clear

* The great Lord Roscommon backs this advice

— Your thoughts you must express

With painful care, but seeming easiness;

For truth shines brightest, through the plainest dress.

Essay on Translated Verse.

clear sentiment, conveyed in plain language, is always preferable to the most decorated obscurities. There is a *simplex munditiis* in writing, as well as in dress; and an elegant simplicity is equally the charm of both.

I cannot resist stepping a little out of my road, to give you some instances of *true* simplicity in style, which may at the same time serve, as specimens and standards. A play, the joint labour of those twin stars in literature, Beaumont and Fletcher, contains, amongst a strange collection of crudities and inconsistencies, the following delightful narrative, of which, the Duke of Buckingham, in his admired Essay on Poetry, says,

“ Thoe occasion, should as *naturally* fall,
As when Bellario, confesses all.”

When Euphrasia is discovered to be a woman, who had followed the fortunes of Philaster in the habit of a boy, under the name of Bellario, being tenderly questioned

tioned upon the subject of her disguise by the Prince, she makes this confession, in which you will find a most enchanting delicacy and modesty: Simplicity herself could not have marked any sentiments more like her own.

My father oft would speak
 Your worth and virtue, and as I did grow
 More and more apprehensive, I did thirst
 To see the man so praised; but yet all this
 Was but a maiden longing, to be lost
 As soon as found; till sitting in my window,
 Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a God
 I thought (but it was you) enter our gates:
 My blood flew out, and back again as fast,
 As I had puff'd it forth, and suck'd it in
 Like breath; then was I call'd away in haste
 To entertain you. Never was a man,
 Heav'd from a sheep-cote to a scepter, rais'd
 So high in thoughts as I: you left a kiss
 Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep
 From you for ever; I did hear you talk
 Far above singing; after you were gone
 I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
 What stirr'd it so: Alas! I found it love;
 Yet far from ill, for could I but have liv'd

In

In presence of you, I had had my end.
 For this, I did delude my noble father
 With a feign'd pilgrimage, and drest myself
 In habit of a boy; and for I knew
 My birth no match for you, I was past hope
 Of having you: And understanding well
 That when I made discovery of my sex,
 I could not stay with you; I made a vow
 By all the most religious things a maid
 Could call together, never to be known
 Whilst there was hope to hide it from mens eyes
 For other than I seem'd, that I might ever
 Abide with you; there sat I by the fount
 Where first you took me up.—

The description of this fount, and the manner in which Euphrasia was there found by Philaster, is likewise well worth your reading. Turn for it to Colman's alterations of this Tragedy, page 11th.

I have a Boy, &c.

The divine poem of *Paradise Lost* accommodates us with a second example. I mean to give you the orders of Adam to Eve, and his preparations, on seeing the

Angel Raphael flying towards the bowers of Paradise. Mr. Addison says, that this Angel passing through the wilderness of sweets, and his distant appearance to Adam, have all the graces that poetry can bestow. 'Tis indeed exquisite writing.

Him, through the spicy forest onward come,
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm
Earth's inmost womb; more warmth than Adam
needs :

And Eve within, due at her hour, prepar'd
For dinner savoury sweets, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry, or grape.

Adam then desires Eve to provide the choicest delicacies of the garden, for the entertainment of her guest.

— Go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
Abundance.

Then

Then follows the finest domestic imagery that ever was painted.

—With dispatchful looks *in haste*
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent,
What choice to choose for delicacy best :
 What *order*, so contriv'd, as not to mix
 Tastes, not well join'd, *inelegant*, but bring
Taste after taste, upheld with kindest change ;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever earth, all bearing mother, yields
 In India or East West, or middle shore :

—Fruits of all kinds, in coat
 Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute *large*, and on the board
 Heaps with *unsparing hand* ; for drink, the grape
 She crushes, ————— and meaths
 From many a berry ; and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams—then strows the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

Par. Lost, B. 5.

In this quotation, you will observe Simplicity, notwithstanding she is dress'd in the richest ornaments of poetry. We will conclude with one example more ; and it shall be from a composition that stands

at the very top of all literature--the *Sacred Writings*. Turn to the 2d Book of Canticles, and you will have the occasion of the picturesque expressions which follow.

“ My beloved spake, and said unto me, rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away ; for lo ! the *winter is past*, the rain is over and gone ; the *flowers appear on the earth*, the time of the *singing birds* is come ; and the voice of the *turtle* is heard in our land. The *fig-tree* putteth forth her green figs, and the *vines* with the tender grapes give a *good smell*. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

You observe in these passages no verbose superfluity ; and though on a very florid subject, no prurience of imagination : Every sentence is concise, every image delicately varied, and every expression is pure, easy, and unlaboured. But it is high time (tho' I must not make an apology for my digression) to put an end to this letter, which has run into greater
length

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length than I intended: That I may not render it still longer however, let me hasten to tell you, how very affectionately

I am,

Dear Archibald,

Your's &c.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE IV.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE FIRST,

[*Concluded.*]

D

THE
FIRST
EPISTLE

TO THE
ROMANS

BY THE
APOSTLE PAUL

CHAPTER I

THE
GOSPEL

E P I S T L E IV.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T THE F I R S T.

[*Concluded.*]

IN the very beginning of the Complaint,
the Author rebukes himself for com-
plaining; and that, upon a series of pathe-
tic arguments, drawn from the misery of
others.

Yet *why complain?* or why complain for one?
Hangs out the sun his lustre but for *me*,
The *single* man? Are angels all beside?
I mourn for millions: 'Tis the common lot;
In *this* shape, or in *that*, has fate entail'd

The

The mother's throes on all of woman born,
Not more the children, than sure heirs of pain. *

Vide 9th page, small edit.

Then follows a poetical survey of those various disasters incidental to human nature. Begin at

War, famine, pest, volcano, &c. &c.

And you will receive great satisfaction from the masterly manner in which the Author has recited this melancholy catalogue: Every natural, and moral evil, is inserted in the list; and such is the power of the language in which the subject is particularis'd, that 'tis impossible to peruse it, without a sigh. But you will *again* wish with me, that the poet had paused, sooner than he has done. Surely the stop should have been at this passage.
To

* Our Author writes still more forcibly, and poetically on this subject, in one of his Tragedies:

Complain of Grief? Complain thou art a man;

Our only lesson, is to learn to suffer;

And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.

We may perhaps employ some of our future leisure in viewing the Doctor as a Dramatist: A character which he sustains with very considerable dignity.

To woe's wide empire.

Page 11, small edit.

Thus far we can scarce pay him an adequate compliment for his entertainment, but afterwards he degenerates into downright bombast: For, such I take to be these lines,

— Deep troubles toss,
Loud sorrows howl, invenom'd passions bite,
Rav'nous calamities our vitals seize,
And threatening fate, wide opens, to devour!

Tell me, Archibald, how you are affected by this passage? To me all this tossing, howling, biting, rav'ning, threatening, seizing, and devouring, is baser than burlesque. After so many fine sentiments, this trash is the more peculiarly ludicrous; but let that which is excellent atone for that which is execrable.

Such fustian indeed, frequently occurs in the plays of Lee, and more particu-

larly in his descriptions of love. What, I ask, but his *lunacy*, could apologize for such paroxysms as these :

Long 'ere slumber clos'd my eyes
The fever of my passion *eat me up* ;
My *bed* was *all afloat* with the *cold drops*
That mortal pain *wrung* from my *lab'ring limbs* ;
My *groans* more deep, than other's *dying gasps*.

THEODOSIUS.

O horrible—!

For all my sighs and tears, &c.
I'll have so many thousand *burning loves* ;
So *swill* my lips, so *fill me*, with thy sweetness
We'll *surfeit* all the night.

ALEXANDER.

This is the love of a King !

.
Dië for him, that's too little, I could burn
Piece-meal away ; or bleed to death, by drops ;
Be *slay'd alive*, then broke upon the wheel ;
And when *let loose* from torments, all, *one wound*,
Run with my *mangled arms*, and *crush him dead*.

Massacre of Paris.

This

This is the love of a lady ! The fit was surely uncommonly strong upon the Author, when he *let loose*, as he calls it, such wretched indecencies : But if a poetical madman may be pardon'd, where shall we find an excuse for the *audience*, that not only admitted, but applauded them, in representation ? Observe a passage where simplicity and good sense is substituted for ribaldry, and nonsense. My memory furnishes me with a sentiment on the very subject of the foregoing ; and it is borrowed from a writer, who can warm into love, or soften into tears, at pleasure. I detain you from it no longer, than while I enjoin you to compare critically the unaffected tenderness of the one, with the others.

Oh I will love thee, even in *madness* love thee !

Tho' my distracted senses should forsake me,

I'd find some *interval* when my poor heart,

Should swage itself and be let loose to thine,

Though the *bare earth* be all our *resting place* ;

It's *roots*, our *food* ; some *clift*, our *habitation* ;

I'll make this *arm* a pillow for thy head :

D 4

And

And as thou sighing ly'st, and swell'd with sorrow,
 Creep to thy bosom, pour thee balm of love
 Into thy soul, and kiss thee, to thy rest;
 Then, *praise our God*, and watch thee, till the
 morning.

Here, chastity of sentiment, is united
 with true poetry; nature and the heart
 are interested in every syllable. In the
 others, the heart is asham'd, nature
 blushes, and taste is insulted.

I am put in mind, by reading Dr.
 Young's review of human calamities, of
 a similar train of thought, pursued by a
 living Author, in a Poem called *Death*.
 You will be induc'd by a quotation, to
 read (if you have not already had that
 pleasure) the whole performance, which
 is equally moral and ingenious. Perhaps
 the Author, (Dr. Porteus) had the senti-
 ments of Dr. Young in contemplation,
 when he thus describ'd the Cave of Death.
 What think you?

Deep in a murky cave recess,
 Lav'd by Oblivion's listless stream, and fenc'd

By

By shelving rocks, and intermingled horrors,
 Of busy noontide beam the Monarch sits
 Of yew and cypress shade from all intrusion
 In *unsubstantial Majesty* enthron'd.
 At his right hand, nearest himself in place
 And frightfulness of form, his parent, *Sin*,
 With fatal industry, and cruel care,
 Busies herself, in *pointing* all his stings,
 And tipping every shaft, with *venom* drawn
 From her infernal store; around him rang'd
 In terrible array, and strange diversity
 Of uncouth shapes, stand his dread Ministers;
 Foremost, *Old Age*, his natural ally
 And firmest friend; next him, *diseases* thick
 A motly train; *fever*, with cheek of fire;
Consumption, wan; *palsy*, half warm with life,
 And half a clay cold lump; joint-tort'ring *gout*,
 And ever-gnawing *rheum*; convulsion, wild;
 Swol'n *dropsy*; panting *asthma*; apoplex,
 Full-gorg'd. There too, the *pestilence*, that walks
 In darkness; and the *sickness*, that destroys
 At broad noon-day. These, and a thousand more,
 Horrid to tell, attentive wait, and when,
 By Heaven's command, Death waves his ebon wand,
 Sudden rush forth, to execute his purpose,
 And scatter desolation o'er the earth.

Dr. PORTEUS's Poem on Death.

Both

Both writers, however, seem to have caught their ideas from *Milton*, upon whom indeed blank verse sat easier than upon any of his successors; tho' Young, Thomson, and a few others, have undoubtedly done themselves honour in the imitation.

Our Author, having examin'd the severer state of others, presents us with some very fine, social reflections; a liberal heart, and christian sensibility, speak in these verses

What then am I, who sorrow for *myself*?
 In age, in infancy, from others aid
 Is all our hope; *to teach us to be kind.*
That, nature's *first, last* lesson to mankind;
 The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels,
 More gen'rous sorrow, while it *sinks, exalts*;
 And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.

Soon after this, you meet with the Poet's first address to LORENZO; but as it is by no means equal to many that follow, I shall pass it over without observation. You will find nothing remarkably striking,

striking, (except a little punning about the words, or rather, as he has made them, the *personages*, of perhaps, and peradventure,) till you come to these two lines,

Of human ills the last extreme beware,
Beware, LORENZO ! a *slow-sudden* death.

This is an admirable piece of advice; the *slow-sudden*, is here an epithet of extensive meaning, and what he afterwards very well explains by calling it a *deliberate surprise*. It is indeed possible for a person to leave the world *suddenly*, in point of preparation, and *fitness* to leave it, though frequent sicknesses, and impairing anxieties afford him a thousand warnings. * I have already told you (and by this time, I dare say, you are convinced) that the
sentiment

* How pathetically this idea is illustrated by the moral Mr. Mason, in his Elegy on the death of a Lady, whose beauty hath been universally celebrated. The opportunity of introducing the passage is too fair to be neglected.

Think of her fate ! Revere the Heav'nly hand
That led her hence, tho' soon, by steps so slow.
Long at her couch death took his patient stand,
And menac'd oft, and oft withheld the blow.

MASON'S Elegies.

sentiment of Dr. Young, is for the most part excellent: His genius was indeed truly *amiable*; and, (when not involv'd in verbal perplexities,) there are few writers in our language who have more effectually, or more *elegantly* promoted the cause of morality. Nor do I believe, I could have chosen any work with greater propriety, to serve my present purpose, of pointing out the beauties and blemishes of a composition, than *The Night Thoughts*; because, (as has been noted above) they are remarkable for *both*; and however, some have affected to despise the *sombre* talents of our poet, they very frequently *command* our admiration. There is a very just severity in this passage:

At *thirty*, man *suspects* himself a fool;
Knows it, at *forty*, and reforms his plan;
 At *fifty*, chides his infamous delay;
 Pushes his prudent purpose, to *resolve*;
 In all the magnanimity of thought
 Resolves; and re-resolves; then *dies the same*.

We

We have here poetry, morality, and satire beautifully blended, and the concatenation of the sense (if you will allow me so systematic a word in a familiar epistle) is well preserved from the first line to the last; a matter of great moment in composition. But still, Archibald, these verses, render several *others* totally unnecessary: and indeed, (being *better*) make them absolutely *expletive*. Carry in mind the *sense* of what is just recited as you run your eye over what follows:

As on a *rock of adamant* we build
Our *mountain hopes*; *spin* out eternal schemes,
As we the fatal Sisters would *out spin*,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

See page 14, small edit.

Be wise to *day*; 'tis madness to defer;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is *push'd out* of life.

* *Procrastination is the thief of time*;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,

And

* Among these verses however, one deserves particular distinction. Perhaps the human mind never conceived a finer or more moral idea than is expressed in this line:

Procrastination is the thief of time.

And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.

Page 15.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
The palm, "That all men are *about to live*."

There is no end of transcribing this writer's *iterations* ; from hence there are fifteen verses *more*, running out of the very same idea, and expatiating upon the same fact. The Doctor himself, I think, Archibald, merits in this place the application of his own expression : for he

Spins out his eternal theme
As he the fatal Sisters would *out-spin*.

Your taste will also be disgusted, at his building a *mountain of hope* upon a *rock of adamant*. Incongruous terms, and inconsistent metaphors blended together, without judgement (as in this case) ever hurt a critical and elegant observer : Whatever favour and indulgence we may shew to *poetry*, we can never license palpable *absurdities*. One of the surest ways

to

to become accurate in your stile, is to read every thing *analytically*; to take every sentiment to pieces, and to examine it's *consistency*. By these means only it is, you will be able to detect literary imposture; by these means you will be able to know a book of mere *words*, from a book of real meaning and sterling sense. There are, my young friend, an infinite quantity of volumes (and some of them swelling into folios) which while they sparkle prettily on the fancy, and amuse the ear, are in fact nothing more than *a ring of changes upon the alphabet*; a kind of verbal * nonentities, sporting with the fancy, but never reaching the heart. Of these, (were not the undertaking extremely invidious), I could give you various examples; aye, and some of them, Archibald, extracted from performances,

* To be taken with such trash, however but can happen only to very superficial and unexperienced readers, who, like children, are

“Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw.”

I am glad to know, that you neither purchase or peruse a book for the frippery of its *external* or *internal* gilding; and I am sure you will continue to despise every day, more and more, the catchpenny artifices of the mere *book-maker*, as well as *book-binder*.

formances that have acquir'd, with † a certain set of readers, no mean share of popularity. But enough ; be satisfied with such hints as fall in our way : Young himself is a full and fair mark for critical instruction.

There is a particular beauty in breaking off the subject *abruptly*, when it cannot be sufficiently exprest : As here,

Can I forget Philander ? that were strange !
O my full heart !—but should I give it vent.

If he had attempted to *go on*, he might have fail'd ; but, by thus giving up the point in despair, he at once shews the greatness of his grief, and the impossibility of describing it. Of this kind is the celebrated line,

Then he would talk--good God how he would talk !

A similar beauty is to be found in the—
I had almost called them—*Garden Pieces*,
of Shenstone—I must refer you to his celebrated love ballads :

I.

† The set above alluded to.

I.

And when her bright form shall appear,
Each bird shall harmoniously join ;
In a concert so soft and so clear,
As——*she may not be fond to resign.*

II.

In ringlets he dresses his hair,
And his crook is bestudded around ;
And his pipe—*O may Phillis beware*
Of a magic there is in the sound.

The thoughts of the First Night conclude extremely modest ; and the compliment to Milton, and to Pope, are very agreeably introduced. 'Tis a little strange, however, that Pope, who knew so well how to say, either a civil or a severe thing, did not take notice of the *many* obliging expressions bestowed on him by our Author : For he (Pope) is mentioned in several parts of the Doctor's writings with singular honour.

Why slumbers Pope, who *leads* the tuneful train,
Nor hears that virtue, which he *loves*, complain ? ‡

LOVE of FAME, Sat. I.

But

‡ In another place, in honour of his memory after death.

“ Pope, who could'st make immortals, art thou dead ?”

But my memory fails me, if Mr. Pope was any where so courteous as to return the compliment. Indeed, Dr. Young was not in his life-time so popular as might be expected from his genius; and writers of scarce a third of his real ability, by being *less grave*, were three times more in vogue.

We will here close our remarks on NIGHT THE FIRST, which is certainly (as Goldsmith observes) one of the best in the collection.

In a few days expect again to hear, from

Dear Archibald,

Your's &c.

Dean Swiift was by no means so forgetful, tho' seldom remember'd by our Author. The same remark has been made of Virgil and Horace. Shall we hence conclude with the poet, that

" Wits are game cocks to one another."

GAY.

And that, like the Turk, they

" Can bear no rival near the throne."

POPE.

Let us not be deceived, by the sentiments of disappointment: There have been, and doubtless are, Authors who can candidly suffer the empire of wit, and the extensive territories of science, to be divided.

EPISTLE.

EPISTLE V.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE SECOND,

EPITAPH

NIGHT THE SECOND

E P I S T L E V.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T T H E S E C O N D,

I AM much flattered my Dear Archibald, by the polite reception you have given my remarks, and in the hope of rendering them still *more* serviceable to you, I am encouraged to proceed. As you are a *candidate for literary fame*, I shall not omit any thing as I go through the Night Thoughts that may be likely to correct, or regulate your taste; and whenever any parallel beauties suggest themselves in other writings, I shall always transcribe them, with such comment and criticism, as may bid the fairest to promote your acquaintance with the elegancies of English

Literature. By the bye, I would have you read (and for that purpose herewith send you by the hand of our ingenious friend Mr. *****) a New Treatise on Composition, by Dr. Oglevie; Elements of Criticism, by my Lord K——; Burke's Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful; Webb's little Essay on Poetry; and Mrs. Montague's Observations on Shakespear. In all these you will find a great number of acute, pleasing, and entertaining remarks; and though I would by no means so fetter your fancy, or so confine the noble freedom of your natural genius, as to advise you to write with a *slavish* and *scrupulous* obedience to the rules of others, yet, your attention to the criticisms of men who have studied the arts of writing, and who have themselves written successfully, will always assist your judgment, and sanctify your choice.

IN NIGHT THE SECOND, are scattered up, and down, many fine reflections; like the night, perhaps, in which it was written,

ten,

ten, 'tis a mixture of gloom and brightness. Here a star of magnitude emits its lustre, and there, cloud and storm may veil its general radiance. To quit figure; Young is a *great* but very *unequal* writer; sometimes he soars into sublimity, and sometimes he sinks into dulness: We are now astonished by the vigorous pindaric flight of his genius, and now surprized to see him sink below puerility. Strong examples of *both*, my Archibald, now attend your observation. Remember that I do not consider this work merely as a poetical *system*, nor view it as a composition in which the rules of writing, or the laws of literature, are strictly observed; because, in fact, *The Complaint*, is an excursive, desultory Poem, regular indeed, (as all Poems should be) in its *design*, viz. the Proofs of Immortality; the Promotion of Piety; and the Preparation for Death; but various in the arguments and reflections by which that design is promoted. 'Tis a book, of solemn, salutary sentiments, written while the mind of the

Author was brooding in silent and pathetic indulgence over its anguish ; and tho' there are several connected subjects treated of, such as the CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH, the RELAPSE, the INFIDEL RECLAIM'D, VIRTUE'S APOLOGY, and the CONSOLATION ; yet the thoughts are upon the whole rather to be considered as miscellaneous than systematic. Once for all, therefore, take notice, that I have little to say about the beginning, middle, and end ; the unities, &c. though some of your and Dr. Young's friends, no doubt would labour to prove that the exact restrictions of Aristotle were every where adhered to :—Some *concatenation* is, to be sure, observed. Just so much indeed, as was absolutely necessary in a Poem, purely *moral*, and no more. As Life, Death, and Immortality were the topics of the First Night, so Time, Death, and Friendship, are the subjects of the Second. Of *Death*, indeed, our Author seems to have been *enamoured*. Misfortune, or meditation, or both, appears so tenderly to have endeared

endeared the King of Terrors, that, from the first leaf to the last, there is scarce a page in which he is not mention'd. This frequent recurrence to the same object produces sometimes, (notwithstanding all the pathos and piety of the sentiment) a very tedious tautology; a great, perhaps the *greatest* error in Dr. Young's compositions. Observe :

All, all on earth, is shadow, all *beyond*

Is substance : —————

How solid all, where *change shall be no more ?*

FIRST NIGHT.

Life's theatre as yet is shut, and *death*,

Strong death alone, can heave the massy bar.

IBID.

Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,

Yon ambient, azure shell, and spring to life,

The *life of Gods*, O transport ! and of man.

Yet man, fool man ! *here* buries all his thoughts.

IBID.

Death ! great proprietor of all ! 'tis thine.

IBID, page 8, small edit.

These are sufficient to serve as hints
for reading with a pencil in your hand,
and

and if you make a stroke under every iteration of this kind, it will bring to your mind these verses of Milton,

——— I fled, and cry'd out *death*.

Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd

From all her caves, and back resounded *death*.

I fled, but *death* pursu'd.

PAR. LOST.

To Shakespear, a *pun* and a *quibble* were luxuries:—his very learned editor, Dr. Johnson, says, the latter was the Cleopatra for which he lost the world, and was *content* to lose it. Young's Cleopatra, for which he had a most violent passion, was a *gingle*. He sometimes fatigues a fine thought, till its beauty becomes quite languid: he plays with his own ideas, till both sound and sense are unintelligible. Hence, he has acquired with many the reputation of an *obscure* writer; than which nothing is more to be dreaded by an author. I am now going to mark down for you a striking instance. He is speaking of the importance of *Time*. Night 2d, page 21, small edition.

Redeem

Redeem we time? Its loss we dearly buy.
 What pleads LORENZO for his high-priz'd sports?
 He pleads time's numerous *blanks*; he loudly pleads
 The straw-like *trifles* on life's common stream.
 From whom those *blanks* and *trifles*, but from *thee*?
 No *blank*, no *trifle*, nature made, or meant.
 Virtue, or *purpos'd* virtue, still be thine;
This cancels thy complaint at once; *this* leaves
 In *act* no *trifle*, and no *blank* in time.

Did ever poor Lee, in the wildest fits of
 phrenzy, produce any thing so strange?
 Metaphor, images, and sentiments; quips,
 quirks, quibbles, and questions jumbled
 together!—To parody a famous line.

Here, thought meets thought, and jostles in *the dark*:

The dark indeed; for what light can
 we possibly strike from this eternal rever-
 beration of *blanks* and *trifles*. The senti-
 ment is so involv'd in the quaintness and
 conceit of the phraseology, that, if it
 were even possible, to reduce it to com-
 mon sense, it were scarce worth the toil of
 disentangling. It is in truth, to use the
 writer's words, both a *trifle* and a *blank*.

Out

Out of his own mouth, Archibald, will we condemn him.

Many verses are bestowed on the subject of *Time*, but you will meet with nothing equal to this beautiful couplet. Speaking of *past* times haunting us, he says,

The spirit walks, of every day's deceas'd,
And *smiles an angel*, or, a *fury frowns*.

The last line is incomparable, and gives the hint to very interesting contemplations. The *birth* of time, is well, but the images are not sufficiently accurate throughout. See page 25, small edition.

To preserve accuracy in all the images of a long *illustration by similitude*, is indeed among the most arduous efforts of united genius and judgment. Shakespear, who was a match for every difficulty, and often without discovering labour, was adequate to *this*. Take notice:

Farewell, a long farewell to all my glory.

This is the state of man; to day he puts forth

The

The tender leaves of hope ; to-morrow blossoms
 And bears his blushing honours thick upon him ;
 The third day comes a frost, a nipping frost,
 And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
 * His greatness is a ripening, nips his root,
 And then he falls, as I do.——

HENRY VIII.

* The commentators are divided upon this passage, and suspect the propriety of the metaphor. Warburton observes that, as spring frosts are not injurious to the roots of fruit trees, he imagines the poet wrote *shoot*. Johnson says, though vernal frosts do not kill the root ; nipping the shoots does not kill the tree, or make it fall, and therefore concludes, that the metaphor will not in either reading correspond exactly with nature. With submission however to such celebrated authorities, I conceive, the *ancient* reading perfectly proper. Experience shews us, that although spring frosts will not kill the root, yet several frosty, nipping mornings succeeding one another, particularly at a time when the trees are in blossom, will certainly nip the root. As to it's falling, I do not suppose Shakespear meant absolute dying. Wolsey fell but was not kill'd by the fall. Thus Dryden, in his famous ode—"fallen, fallen, fallen, from his high estate." A man is figuratively said to fall, when he suddenly declines in his circumstances ; and a tree may be said to fall, when an untimely frost seizes the blossoms, shakes off the fruit, and nips the root. And you will observe that the poet only says nip, a word of very different import from kill.

Be this as it may, in the very same speech we have another comparison, which does not admit even the shadow of objection.

————— I have ventur'd,
 Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
 These many summers in a sea of glory,
 But far beyond my depth : my high-blown pride
 At length broke under me, and now has left me,
 Weary and old with service, to the mercy
 Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.

HENRY VI.

I do

I do not recollect any ridicule of affectation and effeminacy more polite or pointed than our author's address to those, whom he satirically calls, the lillies of our land, the lillies *male*. The whole passage is so beautiful that it deserves unabridged citation. Read attentively :

Ye *well array'd* ! ye lillies of our land !
 Ye lillies *male* ! who neither toil, nor spin,
 (As *sister lillies* might) if not so wise
 As Solomon, more *sumptuous* to the sight !
 Ye *delicate* ! who nothing can support,
 Yourselfs most insupportable ! for whom
 The *winter* rose must blow, the sun put on
 A brighter beam in Leo ; silky soft
 Favonius breathe still softer, or be chid ;
 And *other worlds* send odours, sauce, and song,
 And robes, and nations, fram'd in *foreign looms* !
 O ye LORENZOS of our age ! who deem
 One moment unamus'd, a misery
 Not made for feeble man ! who call aloud
 For every bauble drivell'd o'er by sense ;
 For rattles, and conceits of every cast,
 For change of follies, and relays of joys,
 To drag your patient thro' the tedious length

Of

Of a short winter's *day*—say, sages ! say,
How will you weather an *eternal night*,
Where such expedients fail ?

In a more *sprightly* vein, but similar as
to the *satire*, the divine Shakespear hath
shewn off a coxcomb. Both these quotations
will serve as *models* to you in their
way, and can never be too much read.
Turn to the play of Henry the 4th, the
First Part, and you will there see what in-
troduced this very humourous description,
which is a cutting stroke to our gentle as-
sociation of fops and effeminate, under
the new-fangled name of *Macaronies*. 'Tis
a speech of Hotspur's.

I do remember when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage, and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain Lord, neat, trimly drest,
Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin new reap'd,
Shew'd like a stubble land at harvest home.
He was perfumed like a miliner,
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
A *pouncet*-box, which ever and anon
He gave his nose, and took't away again.

And

And still he smil'd and talk'd ;
 And as the soldiers bare dead bodies by,
 He call'd them, untaught knaves, unmannerly,
 To bring a slovenly, unhandsome corse
 Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
 With many holiday and lady terms,
 He question'd me.

Among the rest, demanded my prisoners
 On your Majesty's behalf.

I, then, all smarting with my wounds grown cold,
 Out of my grief, and my impatience,
 To be so pester'd with a popinjay,
 Answered neglectingly, I knew not what,
 He should, or should not ; for he made me mad
 To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
 And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman,
 Of guns, and drums, and wounds, God save the
 mark !

And telling me the sov'reignest thing on earth
 Was spermaceti for an inward bruise ;
 And that it was great pity, *so it was*,
 That villainous salt-petre should be digg'd
 Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
 Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
 So cowardly. And but for these vile guns
 He would himself have been a soldier.

The

The last recited passage, from Dr. Young, did him honour; and the lines *immediately* following that passage, will do him no less. I mean his fine apostrophe to *conscience*, which he has personified with much judgment, and poetical morality. We will conclude the present long letter with it.

O treach'rous *Conscience*! while she seems to sleep
 On rose and myrtle lull'd, with syren song;
 While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
 On headlong *appetite* the slacken'd reign,
 And give us up to licence, unrecall'd,
 Unmark't;—see, from behind her secret stand,
 The *sly informer* minutes every fault,
 And her dread diary with horror fills.
 Not the gross *act* alone employs her pen;
 She reconnoitres *Fancy's* airy band,
 A watchful foe! the formidable spy,
 List'ning, o'erhears the whispers of our camp:
 Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
 And steals our embryos of iniquity.
 As all rapacious users conceal
 Their doom'sday-book from all consuming heirs;
 Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats

F

Us

Us spendthrifts of inestimable *time* ;
 Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied ;
 In leaves more durable than leaves of brass,
 Writes our whole history ; which Death shall read
 In ev'ry pale delinquent's private ear ;
 And judgment publish. —————

LORENZO, such that sleeper in thy breast !
 Such is her slumber ; and her vengeance such
 For slighted counsel.

I think the power of Conscience, of this
sly informer (as Young calls her) is exquisi-
 tely touched, in the *Tempest*, where
 Ariel, in the shape of an Harpy, informs
 Alonzo of the death of his son Ferdinand,
 and giving his (Alonzo's) cruelty to Pros-
 pero, as the *reason* for it. How well
 does the passage illustrate the foregoing
 one of our Author ?

—————Oh, it is monstrous !

Methought, the *billows* spoke, and told me of it :
 The *winds*, did sing it to me ; and the *thunder*,
 That deep and dreadful organ pipe, pronounc'd
 The name of *Prosper* : it did bask my trespass ;
 Therefore my son i'th'ooze is bedded.

The

The celebrated Author of Irene, has likewise manag'd this subject with his usual energy and elegance.

In vain, *affected raptures* flush the cheek,
And songs of pleasure warble from the tongue,
When fear and anguish labour in the breast,
And all *within* is darkness and confusion.

The simile which follows the above reflection, is exact and just, in every part of it ; and should be really studied by every candidate for the laurels of literature.

Thus, on *deceitful Ætna's* flow'ry side,
Unfading verdure glads the roving eye ;
While *secret flames*, with unextinguish'd rage
Insatiate, on her *wasted entrails* prey,
And melt her treacherous beauties, into ruin.

I have markt the words which give peculiar aptness to the allusion : You know I do not write so much for your mere pleasure, as profit. To read a book for amusement only is what we call *pastime* : To read as an *Author*, is to mix the useful with the entertaining.

In the interval betwixt your receipt of this, and the next Epistle, which upon account of some interventions from my domestic affairs, cannot I think, be this week. I recommend to you the perusal of a sermon, or rather of a moral essay † on the subject of conscience, written by one of the most original, most correct, and most pathetic pens, this nation has for some years produced. The discourse is to be found in Tristram Shandy, and you will certainly thank me for referring you to it.

I am,

Your's, &c.

† It is to be lamented, that most of our modern discourses come under this title. 'Tis the Taste of the Times.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE VI.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE SECOND,

[*Continued.*]

REPORT OF VI

COMMISSION

REPORT OF SECOND

1881

1881

1881

1881

EPISTLE VI.

CRITIQUE

O N

NIGHT THE SECOND,

[*Continued.*]

I AM pleased with your discernment. There is indeed, as you observe, an *appearance* of singularity and affectation in *Sterne*, but it is *only* an appearance. So we are apt to imagine of *Young*. All affectation is to be distinguished by comparing *parts* with the *whole*. If the tenor of an author's stile be throughout the same; if through a variety of volumes, you trace a similar *mode* of reasoning, and a similar construction of language, depend

upon it, that it is *not* affectation. On the other hand, if a writer in pursuit of his subject, forgets in the second part the design projected in the first; if he starts eccentrically from an easy, natural stile, to a conceited, flippant, shewy manner of expression; if *one* part of a composition is distinguished for its sublimity, and another for its meanness, *that*, possibly may be affectation. Now Sterne, (as you will take notice when you come to be more intimate with him) is a very uniform writer, both in respect of thinking, and expression of thought: So is Dr. Young. The first, now and then deviated into trifling, and the latter sometimes degenerated into bombast or obscurity, but still, it was in both, the error of nature, and not of art. Neither knew the fault at the time of composing, nor even at the period of polishing; for, had this been the case, they would certainly have corrected, at least in a second edition the mistakes of a first. But the ardour of a great genius, which
is

is generally, if not constantly, accompanied with a glowing fancy, often hurries a man into absurdities; and such is a writer's partiality for the offspring of his own imagination, that even in reviewing them at a cooler moment, like over fond parents, judgment either *cannot*, or *must* not see clear enough to correct. The mistake, however, was undoubtedly at first Nature's—But you, my Archibald, may gather from your observation, a point of *the utmost importance in literature*: It is, that *Correctness* is—I had almost said, of as much importance as genius, and that, what is written warmly and hastily, should be reviewed, coolly and deliberately. Perhaps Mr. Pope owes half, or more than half his reputation, to a zealous adherence to *this rule*.* As to *singularity*, it is at all times better than *sameness*; I mean, it

* Remember the advice of Dean Swift.

“ Blot out, correct, insert, refine,
Enlarge, diminish, interline.”

is better to write like an original, than a copier. Every *good writer* is possesst of some mark of excellence peculiar to himself; and I am afraid that (such is the debility of the wisest mind) every good writer hath likewise a characteristic imperfection.

“ He, who expects a *perfect piece* to see,
Expects what *never was*,” &c.

You recollect the lines. However, the patterns both of right and wrong, of defect and excellence, are before you; it is your duty, my Archibald, then, to catch instruction from *both*; to avoid, as much as may be, the one, and improve, in the same proportion, upon the other. Don't read any more of Sterne at present; let us attach ourselves wholly to Dr. Young. Festina lente.

Our poet often betrays want of skill in crouding his verses with *epithets*, and
some-

sometimes, indeed, with such as are ill chosen. An instance :

Man sleeps; and *Man* alone; and *Man*, whose fate,
Fate irreversibile, intire, extreme,
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken,——

What shall we say to this *irreversibile, intire, extreme, endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken* fate, which is said to tremble a moment over the gulph, and then soufe into it? But the climax (if a climax it is) sounds painfully upon a polished ear.

Man sleeps; and *Man* alone; and *Man*, whose fate,
Fate irreversibile, &c.

Epithets are yet sometimes eminently beautiful; as in this well-known passage, where you may also mark the fine climax.

The *cloud-capt* Towers,
The *gorgeous* Palaces, the *great* Globe itself,
Yea, *all* which it inherits, shall *dissolve*,
And, like the *baseless* Fabrick of a Vision,
Leave not a Wreck behind.

SHAKESPEAR.

Or

Or in this, though few quotations appear to advantage after Shakespear; and Gray himself was a little too liberal of epithet.

The breezy call, of incense-breathing morn;
The swallow twittering on the straw-built shed;
The cock's shrill clarion, and the echoing horn,
No more shall wake them from their lowly bed.

Elegy in a Church-yard.

What an inharmonious, hard line, is the next!

Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,
Hell threatens, all exerts.

It is full of sentiment, but absolutely forlorn of poetry. It is, I think, a fault to preserve too much similitarity in the construction of a verse, supposing the sense to be different, as here:

Such is the language of man awake;
His ardor such.

A line

A line or two of the like construction, and sound, occurred just before, in the first Night.

Lorenzo, *such* that sleeper in thy breast !
Such is her slumber.*

But Pope, I think, of all great poets, is the most faulty in this respect. He almost kills us with the harmonious sameness of his versification. We

Die of a verse, in mere poetic pain.†

I could, I am positive, in a survey of his works, collect from thence more than a thousand lines, so rigidly set to the same tune, that they seem merely musical echoes to each other. Surely, there should be some variations, and though it is not so much the fashion as it was in his time,

* Shakespear too is apt to play upon words, and ring the poetical chimes upon the ears of his reader. Take one instance out of many.

————— *Admir'd Miranda !*
 Indeed the top of *admiration* !

† Parodied from
 Die of a rose, in aromatic pain.

to

to make a correspondence betwixt sense and sound, yet the sound certainly should not be too like.† Pray recollect this observation

† What he contemptuously observes of others, is honestly true of himself.

Where'er you find "The cooling Western breeze,"
In the next line it "Whispers through the trees:"
If chrystal streams "With pleasing murmurs creep,"
The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with "sleep."

With respect to the echo or correspondence of sound and sense, I have observed it is not so much the taste as in his time, and therefore his rule that,

The sound should seem an echo to the sense

Is less *general* than it was. Many poets have used it successfully.

Above, below, without, within, around.

POPE.

Pass and repass, advance and glide away.

ibid.

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow.

ibid.

But in the couplet immediately following, he has fallen into the very error he reprobates.

Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the plain.

This is not only a *needleless* Alexandrine, but a very improper one, for instead of conveying an idea of *speed*, it is little less sluggish than the

Wounded snake which drags its slow length along.

Thomson has, methinks, done better; and even his *verbosity* has been of service to him in the sequent description.

At last the rous'd up river pours along:
Resistless, *roaring dreadful*, down it comes
Trembling through rocks *abrupt*, and sounding far;

Then

ervation when you read the Rape of the Lock, which in point of machinery, invention, and poetry, yields only to writings to which it is no dishonour, to stand in *any degree* of competition. The Tempest has the advantage in respect of fancy, but the Rape of the Lock surpasses even that (which Dr. Warburton pronounces to be, the noblest effort of that sublime and amazing imagination, which soars above the bounds of Nature without forsaking Sense) in point of delicate modern satire. Both have indeed given, with peculiar beauty,

—————“ To airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.”

Alliteration has likewise a fine or ill effect, agreeable to the skill with which it is used.

Shall we be *poorer*, for the *plenty pour'd*?

Then o'er the sanded valley, floating spreads,
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again constrain'd
Between two meeting hills, it bursts away,
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
There gathering triple force, *rapid and deep*,
It *boils*, and *wheels*, and *foams*, and *thunders* through.

There

There is too much sameness betwixt
poorer and *pour'd* in this verse: But the
Doctor is much happier in one above it.

————— *Fly off*
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still.

A line of alliterated monosyllables is
generally ill, as thus:

When worlds want wealth to buy.

Dryden and Pope are admirable, for the
most part, in this respect. Words of the
same sound, occurring in the same line,
offend the ear.

————— Each night we die,
Each *morn* are *born* anew.*

A very long word is extremely unpo-
etical.

In his *immutability*, to nest.

* Observe a fault of the same kind from Shakespear:

————— These people of the island,
Who, tho' they are of monstrous shape, yet, note,
Their manners are more gentle-kind, than of
Our human generation, you shall find
Many, nay, almost any.

When

When our author has *suspended* (for lose sight of them he never does) his contemplations on Death in the Second Night, he descants on the important subject of Friendship, his exordium to which subject, in page 34th of small edition, will strike you.

* On this, or similar, Philander ! thou
Whose mind was moral, as the preacher's tongue ;
&c. &c.

Supposing the book to be in your hand, and your eye upon the passage, I will proceed to analyse it with you. Let us put the whole page into plain prose : Compare it with the original as you read. I have put the original at the bottom, by way of note.

O R I G I N A L.

On *this*, or similar, Philander ! thou
Whose mind was moral, as the preacher's tongue ;
And strong, to wield all science, worth the name ;
How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,
And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream !
How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve,
By conflict kind, that struck our latent truth,
Best found, so sought ; to the *recluse* more coy !
Thoughts disintangle passing o'er the lip ;
Clean runs the thread ; if not, 'tis thrown away,
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song.

G

Thou,

Thou, my Philander, wert able to *weild* all sciences—(who would think of *weilding* a science?) We have talk'd down the summer's fun, and *cool'd* our *passions* by the stream. Cold water is indeed a kind of cooler, but for a *summer* stream it is rather apt to agitate than freeze. In any other sense it is but poor; but go on. We have cool'd our passions, and not only struck out latent truth, by kind conflict, but often *thaw'd* a winter's evening by our conversation. We have besides *disintangled thoughts*, passing o'er the *lip*, till the *thread* runs clear, which otherwise would only serve to *tie up nonsense*. Now in poetry, I mean in measure, this *bundle* is so *tied up*, as to make a florid nosegay.—You will read it both ways. Without descending to ill-nature, I am afraid, the Doctor has tied up here little better than nonsense with his fine-spun thread. That you may see a still more glaring instance of this noble genius's occasional puerility, and in your own very promising efforts avoid it, observe what follows: He is speaking of

Con-

Contemplation as a poor substitute for the privilege of speech, Page 35. I shall transpose it as before.

* Contemplation is poor and proud unsustained by converse; *rude thought* runs wild, in the *field* of Contemplation. (Here is the image of an unbroken colt.) Converse is the menage, and breaks it to the bit of restraint. (Here is the image of the rider.) The jockey Conversation, puts a bridle into the mouth of the steed Thought, just caught from the pastures of Contemplation, and the *spur* (this alludes to the caparison) the spur of Emulation gives a graceful energy, providing the jockey can fix himself well in the saddle.

O R I G I N A L.

* In *contemplation* is his proud resource ?

'Tis poor, as proud, by Converse unsustain'd.

Rude thought runs wild in Contemplation's field ;

Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit

Of due restraint; and Emulation's spur

Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.

We are, however, well compensated even for these childish effusions, by the many manly and masterly sentiments we meet with upon this subject afterwards. I shall take the liberty to pick and choose a few passages, and, *uniting them together*, present you with what you will wish had never been clouded or involved in so much trash as they are in the original. Oh! Archibald, that YOUNG had known the consequence of weeding the poetical garden! then, instead of travelling through so many pages for a flower, we should wander delighted in a paradise. I begin to collect from the 34th page, but will reserve the quotations for the next Epistle.

Adieu.

P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T.

AS I have mentioned *alliteration* in this Epistle, let us enter into more explicit illustrations upon this subject from the best authors.

And the *huge* columns *heave* into the skies.

POPE.

—Sculpture rising on the *roughen'd* gold.

Ibid.

With *loads of learned* lumber in his head.

Ibid.

As to the sea *returning* rivers roll.

Ibid.

The *pealing* anthem swells the note of *praise*.

GRAY.

Nor cast one *longing, lingering* look behind.

Ibid.

The next with *dirges due* in sad array.

Ibid.

And pore upon the *brook* that *babbles* by.

Ibid.

While yet my *steady step* no *staff* sustains.

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Like *stepping stones* to *save a stride*.

Dr. SWIFT.

We *seek* our *bliss* a *separate way*.

KENRICK.

—— *busy* hope and *bustling* care.

Ibid.

To animate their *wood* and *wire*.

Ibid.

How oft by *Satan*, and by *Sin*.

Ibid.

Hail to thy *living light*

Ambrosial morn ! all hail thy *roseate ray* :

That bids young *Nature* all her charms display,

In varied *beauty* bright.

That bids each dewy-spangled flowret rise,

And *dart* around its *vermilion* dies ;

Bids *silver* lustre grace yon *sparkling* tide,

That *winding* warbles down the mountain's side.

MASON.

Fast

Fast asleep !

Enjoy the *honey, heavy* dew of slumber.
Thou hast no *figures*, nor no *fantasies*,
Which *busy* cares draw in the *brains* of men,
Therefore thou *sleep'st so sound*.

SHAKESPEAR.

The *soul, secure* in her existence, smiles
At the *drawn dagger*, and *defies* its point.

ADDISON.

Black was his *beard*, and manly was his face,
He *look'd, a lion* with a gloomy stare ;
And o'er his eyebrows *hung* his matted *hair* :
Big bon'd and *large of limbs*, with *sinews strong*—
Whene'er he spoke, his voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet with a *silver sound*.

DRYDEN.

From these beautiful and expressive
examples, you may sometimes venture
(but cautiously) to call in what a poet
calls

Apt alliteration's artful aid.

Sometimes indeed it will happen acci-
dentally—but use it sparingly, least it
should have the air of studied affectation.

Much attention is due to sound, but more to sentiment.

In the bright Muse a *thousand* charms conspire,
Her *voice* is all the *tuneful* fools admire.

Remember, therefore, that,
Different styles with different subjects sort.

A beauty, soon becomes a blemish, by
mismanagement.

Farewell.

E P I S-

EPISTLE VII.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE SECOND,

[*Concluded.*]

VI
EPISTLE VII

CRITIQUE

ON
NIGHT THE SECOND

[Continued]

EPISTLE VII.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE SECOND,

[*Concluded.*]

IS not the pen of a master in these lines?

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?
 As bees mixt nectar draw, from fragrant flow'rs,
 So men, from friendship, wisdom and delight.
 Nature, in zeal for human amity,
 Denies, or damps, an *undivided* joy.
 Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two;
 _____ To give
 To social man true relish of himself.
 Full on *ourselves* descending in a line

Pleasure's

Pleasure's bright beam, is feeble in delight :
Delight intense, is taken by rebound ;
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial happiness, whene'er she stoops
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
And one alone, to make her sweet amends
For absent heav'n—the bosom of a friend ;
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
Each other's pillow to repose divine.

Lorenzo ! pride repress ; nor hope to find
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.
All like the purchase ; few the price will pay ;
And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)
I shew thee friendship delicate, as dear,
Of tender violations apt to die ?
Reserve will wound it ; and distrust, destroy.
Deliberate on all things with thy friend.
But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,
Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core ;
First, on thy friend, delib'rate with *thyself* ;
Pause, ponder, sift ; not eager in the choice,
Nor jealous of the chosen ; fixing, fix ;
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.
Well, for thy friend ; but nobler far for thee ;

How

How gallant danger for earth's highest prize !
 Poor is the friendless master of a world.

Friendship's the wine of life ; but friendship new
 Is neither strong, nor pure.
 O ! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
 And elevating spirit, of a friend,
 For twenty summers ripening my tide ;
 All feculence of falshood long thrown down ;
 All social virtues rising in his soul ;
 As crystal clear ; and smiling, as they rise !
Here nectar flows ; it sparkles in our fight ;
 Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.
 High-flavour'd bliss for gods ! on earth how rare !

Thus, Archibald, have I, with adventurous hand, *culled* from four or five pages, something better than forty lines, which surely stand in a much more agreeable light than before ; since I believe you will agree with me, that what I have rejected, are either useless, or quibbling, or superfluous. From such passages as these, we may gather the force and elegance of our author's genius ; and while you are delighted with the sterling importance of the
senti-

sentiment, you will be charmed with the poetic pathos in which it is drest. The other parts of the Second Night that present any thing peculiar, are the Doctor's descriptions of a bed, on which dying Virtue is deposited. Perhaps there is no passage in the Night Thoughts superior, in point of sentiment, to the following. Study it, my dear Archibald, thoroughly, and you will then admire the man and the christian, even more than the poet and philosopher. The strokes which I deem the more eminently fine, I have distinguished by *italics*.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk
Of *virtuous* life, quite in the verge of heav'n.
Fly, ye profane !

There is a beautiful dignity in this apostrophe.

Fly, ye profane ! If not, draw near with awe,
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance,

That

That threw in this Bethesda your disease ;
If unrestor'd by *this*, despair your cure.

For, *here*, resistless demonstration dwells ;
A death-bed's a detector of the heart.

Here tir'd Dissimulation drops her masque,
I bro' life's grimace, that mistress of the scene !
Here real, and apparent, are the same.

You see the man ; you see his hold on heav'n.

.

Heav'n waits not the last moment ; owns her friends
On *this side* death ; and points them out to men,
A lecture, silent, but of sov'reign pow'r !
To vice, confusion ; and to virtue, peace.

Two lines immediately succeed this quotation, which merit inscription on a leaf of adamant.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majesty in death.

I have now an opportunity to shew you, where, and when, the *repetition of a word* is agreeable. Our author speaking of the dying situation of Philander, closes with this affecting couplet.

And oh ! the *last*, LAST ; what ? (can words express ?
Thought reach it ?) the LAST—silence of a friend.

The

The second Night's contemplation finishes with a simile, in which, however, you will not find any thing uncommon: Nevertheless, if I have omitted any passages, either in my Critique on this, or the former Night, which strike you, pray point them out to me, and I shall be indebted to you for every beauty you restore to me, and to our amiable author; whose chief fault is, that his genius was sometimes too many and mighty for his judgment.

Farewell,

EPISTLE

EPISTLE VIII.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE THIRD,

H

THE FIRST PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
LIFE OF THE LATE KING OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND CHARLES THE SECOND
BY JOHN BURNET
OF THE SOCIETY OF THE APOSTOLICAL APOSTLES
IN THE CITY OF LONDON
LONDON: Printed by J. Streater, at the Sign of the
Anchor, in St. Dunstons Church, near St. Pauls Church
1699.

ON

NIGHT

II

EPISTLE: VIII.

CRITIQUE

O N

NIGHT THE THIRD.

WE now come, my dear young friend, to Night the Third; in my opinion, the most elegant of the collection: The parent, the poet, and the moralist, breathe through almost every part of it, and I scarce know how to enter upon *particular* extracts, without doing a partial injury to its *general* excellence. I would wish you therefore to read the whole, with a more than ordinary care, and to accept a few remarks, in a single letter, that may possibly help you to enjoy the sentiments, more fully. It is entitled *Narcissa*, and very pathetically discovers

the writer's love and tenderness, for that young lady. She was his daughter, my Archibald; a daughter whom he lost in the bloom of life, and in the bridal hour: No wonder therefore that he writes from the heart, on such an occasion. As he says himself;

Who not inflam'd, when what he speaks, he *feels*,
And in the nerve, *most tender*, in his friends?

The opening of this contemplation is fine, and the apostrophe excited by the first sentiment, very deservedly celebrated:

O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul!
Who think it solitude to be alone.
Communion sweet! communion large, and high!
Our reason, guardian Angel, and our God.
&c.

The *first* couplet in this quotation gives another instance of the good effect of repeating a word in a *proper* place.

O *lost* to virtue, LOST to, &c.
LOST to_____

The

The *last* line exhibits great propriety in the climax :

Our *reason*, GUARDIAN ANGEL, and our GOD.

Our Author's invocation to the Moon "the silver Queen of Heaven," as he calls her in the language of poetry, is not unlike an address to the Dean of St. Patrick's in the Dunciad,

POPE says,

O, thou, whatever title please thine ear,
Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver !
Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,
Or laugh and shake, &c.

See DUNCIAD, Book I.

YOUNG says,

What title, or what name endears thee most !
Cynthia, Cyllene, Phæbe—or dost hear
With higher gust, &c. &c.

"Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye;" from hence the afflictions of an indulgent, and insulted father, are represented to us in style equally na-

tural, poetical, and animated : And the reflection arising from the Doctor's sentiments on the cruelty of refusing christian burial to Narcissa, is written with all the force of wounded feelings ; containing at the same time a truth, to the blush of society.

Man, hard of heart to man ! Of horrid things
Most horrid ! * * * * *

Yet oft his *courtesies* are *smoother* wrongs ;
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
And contumelious his humanity :
What then his *vengeance*.

These lines admirably prepare us for what follows : If man is thus deceitful, even in his kindness, what must be his hatred ?

What then his *vengeance* ? Hear it not, ye stars !
And thou, pale moon ! turn paler at the sound ;
Man is to man the *forest*, *surest* ill.
A previous *blast* foretells the rising storm ;
O'erwhelming *turrets* threaten e'er they fall ;
Volcanos bellow e'er they disembody ;
Earth trembles e'er her yawning jaws devour ;

And

And *smoke betrays* the wide consuming fire:
 Ruin from *man* is most *conceal'd* when near,
 And sends the dreadful *tidings* in the *blow*.

We have already noted the Doctor's extraordinary attachment to the subject of Death ; a subject which is never long suspended in the complaint: It was scarce dropt in the Second Night, e'er it is resumed in the Third, and you will find it carried on to the very last leaf of the last book. It cannot certainly be too much contemplated ; yet, where it is extended and spun out to so many hundred lines, the sentiments must, of consequence, be too often the *same* ; and even the expressions, however varied, render us fatigued with them. Some of the best thoughts, nevertheless, on this momentous subject are to be found in the Night, under present consideration. Indeed the miscellaneous Thoughts on both Life and Death, beginning at page 53, of small edition, equal, if they do not exceed any thing the Doctor has before urg'd to us. His ideas of

the *business* of departed friends, tho' some may imagine they too much favour the notion of what we understand by Guardian Angels, are delightful.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
To damp our brainless ardours ; and abate
That glare of life, which often blinds the wise.

Each friend by fate snatch'd from us, is a plume
Pluckt from the wing of human vanity,
&c.

—————Smitten friends
Are Angels sent on errands full of love ;
For us they languish, and for us they die :
&c.

The terror and tediousness of eternity in
this world is excellently treated indeed.

Live *ever here*, LORENZO ?

For *what* live ever here ?—with lab'ring step
To tread our *former* footsteps ? Pace the round
Eternal ? To climb life's worn heavy wheel,
Which draws up nothing new ? To beat, and beat,
The beaten track ? To bid each wretched day
The former mock ? To surfeit on the *same*,

And

And yawn our joys? Or thank a *miser*
 For change, tho' sad? To see, what we *have* seen?
 Hear, till *unheard*, the same old *slabber'd* tale?
 To taste the *tasted*, and at each return
 Less tasteful? —————

Yet writers of character, should always avoid exciting indelicate and filthy ideas. In this very description the Doctor has admitted expressions enough to disgust the coarsest stomach. Perhaps he intended it: It is nevertheless a stain on a pure stile. What can be nastier, even in the notion, than the "old *slabber'd* tale" "scratching a little dust o'er putrid earth, to save the world a nuisance," "starving on orts," "chewing the present; loading the ill-concocted foul kennels of excess, or straining the thoroughfares of debauch." Such sentiments, may possibly shew us the faults they describe plainer, but still some degree of nicety might certainly be preserved. The vulgar lip indeed, yields to naked nature, and talks dirtily without feeling of fence; 'tis the part of a man of education
 and

and genius, not to conceal or weaken the force of crimes, but to discover his abhorrence of them, like a gentleman.

Were I not afraid of tiring you, I should be tempted once more to produce instances where our Author is sporting most childishly with words: But it is unnecessary; I have given you the memento that it is his fault, and wherever he is committing it, your own penetration will serve to detect him tripping. Let not however the slight quotations and criticisms made on this last book, prevent you from perusing the *whole*. I have not selected, or spoken to a third of its excellencies. Read them, relish them, enjoy them. Pay the tribute of a young man's tear, to poor Narcissa; admire the paternal fervor of the father; and from his success in the sentiments, take notice by comparing those, with others, how much better an author must always write, in the moment of *feeling*.—I had almost called it, the moment of *inspiration*; how much

[107]

much better Archibald, than when un-
touch'd by the occasion, he takes up the
pen, and sits down to his performance,
as to a *task*, in cold blood. That *your*
compositions, my Archibald, may not
only convince the understanding but move
the heart, is truly the wish of

Your's, &c.

EPISTLE

[701]

much better Archibald, than when un-
touched by the occasion, he takes up the
pen, and sits down to his penmanship,
as to a day in cold blood. That your
compositions, my Archibald, may not
only convince the understanding but move
the heart, is truly the wish of
me: sorrow that Archibald has not
yet been able to do so. I am sure
that you have the power. Yours, &c.
Edw. Young

EPISTLE IX.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE FOURTH.

EPISTLE IX.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE FOURTH

[III.]

EPISTLE IX.

[CRITIQUE

O. N

NIGHT THE FOURTH.

NIGHT the Fourth, my dear Archibald, carries with it an awful title : The Christian's *Triumph* against the fears of Death, with proper sentiments of heart on that inestimable blessing : But the great business of this book is to enter into a poetical review of that stupendous testimony of tenderness and compassion, manifested in the sufferings and sacrifice of our blessed and beneficent Redeemer. This glorious theme, Dr. Young has laboured to adorn and dignify, with all the force and energy of
of

of his genius: His heart and head were equally warm'd and delighted; and yet, I really think, he is upon the whole, less successful than might be expected. How it happens I am unable to determine, but even Milton seems to fail, whenever he enters into the sacred mysteries of the divine redemption. The astonishing powers of his pen are enchantingly displayed even in his characters of evil spirits, and his portrait of the arch-fiend himself; in the discourse and endearments of our first parents in paradise,—in the conversation of the visiting Seraphs, and in the sublimity, pomp, and pathos, with which he describes their persons; but, when he forsakes the limits of *this world*, and endeavours to draw a picture of the bountiful Author of *the other*; even where he attempts the glorious subject of our Saviour tendering himself as the virtuous, voluntary victim, it is no longer Milton; the poetical paradise which he opened on us before, seems to fade: Paradise is
indeed

indeed Lost, and never *Regained*, till he drops his pinion. For this miscarriage, I know of but one likely reason, viz. that the subject is altogether beyond mortal comprehension, and upon that account fairly out of the flight of the finest, brightest, and boldest imagination; consequently, every human effort to do it justice, must prove abortive. *Finite* genius, is absolutely lost in the *infinity* of the idea. The divine topic of our Saviour's Sacrifice, was I believe never so well treated, as by the Authors of that *sacred volume*, wherein it was originally delivered to us; even the translation exceeds all attempts that have been made since; and though Young and Milton, have both, in this respect, copied the elegancies of the Scripture, I cannot think either has equalled them. But, let not this, Archibald, deter you from reading what Dr. Young has to offer.

All his reflections, even when they sink in poetry, become valuable from their precept, and your heart must catch the holy

I contagion

contagion as you read them. Our Author has perhaps done as much as mere man could do, and it is no derogation from his merit to deny to him the power which seems to have been denied to all his race. Pray therefore study his sentiments, consider those facts which require no decoration from poesy, and venerate the writer for his devotion. There are, besides, in the Fourth Night, several admirable observations, and some passages of peculiar sublimity: A few slips likewise occur, and some errors proper to be marked out to you as a warning, lest in the ardour of composition, you should commit them too.

It has been frequently said, that the apparatus and formidable ceremonies of death are worse than death itself. Tho' this remark is of great antiquity, yet it is thrown into very interesting language by our Author;—

The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;

These

These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead.
Man makes a death, which nature never made;
Then on the point of his own fancy falls;
And feels a thousand deaths, in fearing one.

From the following lines we learn that our poet, like most other poets, was flattered and forgot by Patrons and by Princes. Literary people, Archibald, would do well to pursue the text of Scripture which says, "put not your trust in Princes, neither in mighty men:" but the misery of it is, Princes have the money, and poets have only the sense. † Dr. Young speaks feelingly upon the subject of *his* disappointment.

What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,
And I at them; —————

Nor that the worst: ah me! the dire effect
Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long;
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice,)
My very master knows me not. —

P've been so long remember'd, I'm forgot.

I 2

When

† One have *solid pudding*, the other *empty praise*, says Mr. Pope.

When in his courtiers ears I pour my plaint,
 They drink it as the nectar of the great;
 And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-
 morrow;

Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form? A

All this is well enough, except an impropriety in the two lines above.

When in his courtiers ears, &c.

How can a courtier be said to *drink* that complaint as nectar, which is poured in at his ears? Guard, my young friend, in a particular manner, against such inconsistent phrases. You see how they disfigure a fine poem. As to the satire conveyed in these verses, 'tis precisely as old as petitions and disappointments. The arrows of wit have always been levell'd at the courtier, since the commencement of the courtly character. Mercy upon me, what bitter things could I collect from the writings of angry bards on this fruitful subject, were I to task my recollection. As two or three examples occur, without the

the trouble of hunting for them, pray accept them.

Bertram has been taught the art of courts,
To gild a face with smiles, and leer a man to ruin,
DRYDEN.

Learn the cruel arts of courts :
Be easy, affable, familiar, friendly,
Learn to dissemble wrongs, and smile at injuries.

ROWE.

Be careful to avoid both courts and camps.

OTWAY.

All this, is the extravaganza of disappointment, and betrays, at least, want of philosophy : I only mention the point, because, if you are ever tempted to indulge any acrimony on this occasion, you may remember, that all railing is already anticipated ; and, in fact, nothing is vainer than satirizing people in splendid life : However keen the shaft, or dexterous the hand which directs it, the great man spreads across his bosom the *golden shield*, and the point is immediately blunted :

To quit figure; people of fortune, if they are capable of deceit, are secure in their purses, and laugh at the artillery of satire. I have half got into metaphor again. Our Author having sported his resentment, cools a little, and congratulates himself, as indeed he well might, on a timely retreat from treachery, and the world.

Blest be that hand divine, which gently laid
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.

The other lines on this subject are too metaphoric, and the figures too frequently and suddenly varied. His sentiments of gratitude to heaven for recovery from sickness, do credit at the same time to his heart, and his understanding.

O thou great arbiter of life and death !
Nature's immortal, immaterial sun !
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay
The worm's inferior, —
——— High to bear my brow;
To drink the spirit of the golden day;

And

And triumph in existence;—

—With the patriarch's joy,

Thy call I follow to the land unknown;

I trust in thee, and know, in *whom* I trust

Or life, or death, is equal; neither weighs:

All weight in this—O let me live to thee!

The spirit of christianity is here; but it glows more warmly *still* in the verses following; which perhaps, both for their poetry and morality, are equal to the addresses of Milton himself: They are neither degraded by quibble, nor obscured by circumlocution, but seem to come pure as animated, from the mind of their Author. Having said thus much, you will naturally expect me to produce them, in proof of their meriting my eulogy.

—From courts and thrones

Return, apostate praise! to thy first love return,

There flow redundant; like Meander flow

Back to thy fountain; to that parent power,

Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,

The soul, to be—

Great Sire,—

Thine, all; day thine, and thine this gloom of night;

With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds :
 What, night *eternal*, but a frown from thee ?—
 What, heav'ns meridian glory, but thy smile ?

These reflections swell the poet's soul
 into rhapsody. It is impossible for sensi-
 bility to *read* without devotion. Hear,
 with what noble and reverent pathos he
 goes on :

O may I breathe no longer, than I breathe
 My soul in praise to *him*,
 O most adorable ! most *unador'd* !
 Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should
 end !

Where-e'er I turn, what claim on all applause !
 How is night's fable mantle labour'd o'er,
 How richly wrought with attributes divine !
 What *wisdom* shines ! what *love* ! This midnight
 pomp,

This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlay'd !
 Built with divine ambition ! nought to thee ;
 For others this profusion : Thou, apart,
 Above ! beyond ! Oh tell me, mighty mind !
 Where art thou ? Shall I dive into the *deep* ?
 Call to the *sun*, or ask the roaring *winds*,
 For their Creator ? Shall I question loud

The

The *thunder*, if in that th' Almighty dwells ?
 Or holds he furious *storms* in straiten'd reins ;
 And bids fierce *whirlwinds* wheel his rapid car ?
 What mean these questions ?—Trembling I retract ;
 Praise I a *distant* deity ? He tunes
 My voice (if tun'd) ; the nerve, that writes, sustains ;
 The nameless He, whose nod is *nature's* birth ;
 And nature's shield, the shadow of his hand ;
 Her dissolution, his suspended smile !

——Pavillion'd high he fits

In darkness, from excessive splendor, borne,
 His glory to *created* glory, bright,
 As that to central horrors ; he looks down
 On all that soars ; and spans immensity.

Reminded by this passage, of similar excellence, in two other famous English poets, I stop a moment, and agreeable to my plan, recommend to you, the morning prayer of Adam and Eve, at the door of their bower, written with a divine enthusiasm, and in the purest spirit of exquisite poetry, by the Author of *Paradise Lost*, book 5th ; and likewise an hymn to the Almighty by the celebrated James Thomson, to be found at the end of his

fine

fine poems upon the Seasons. Both these pieces are borrowed from the sacred writings, and only yield to *them* in execution. Indeed, I can never give any *other* writings the preference.

You will meet, in the course of Night the Fourth, a beautiful description of that astonishing Meteor, a comet.

Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight ?
Th' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds
On gazing nations, from his fiery train,
Of length enormous, takes his ample round
Thro' depths of ether ; coasts unnumber'd worlds,
Of more than solar glory ; doubles wide
Heaven's mighty cape ; and then revisits earth,
From the long travel of a thousand years ?

The monarch of blank verse, * has not touched this subject with greater sublimity.

— Like a comet

That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' artic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war.

We

* Milton.

We will bring our observations on this book to a period, with noticing a few improprieties, not as I have before told you from a passion to censure, but to shew *you*, who love *poetry* without *rhime*, * what appears to me to be its beauties, and what its defects.

Can love allure us? or can terror awe?

He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun;

He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.

In these lines the arrangement is injudicious: for every idea, meant to strike, should *rise* upon us in its progress. This *sinks*. A sigh is, in common, less affecting than a tear: To shake the earth with the force of that sigh, is by no means so grand an image as putting out the sun with a tear. The sun is in *itself* one of the sublimest objects in nature, and the earth always yields the glory to it in our imagination. You will read with greater pleasure by *transposing* the verses, thus—

1 He sighs, &c.

2 He weeps, &c.

These

* Some say there is no such thing.

These literary minutiae, are of inconceivable consequence. Do you not feel the effect of transposition ?

Devotion, when *lukewarm*, is undevout ;
But when it *glows*, its *heat* is struck to heaven ;
To human hearts her *golden harps* are strung ;
High heav'n's *orchestra* chaunts *amen* to man.

The last line is vastly too vulgar and familiar an expression; the *orchestra* of Heaven, It is the phrase of a fidler. How much greater dignity is there in Milton's description ?

No sooner had the Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of angles, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices uttering joy, heaven rung
With jubilee ; and loud *Hosanna's* fill'd
Th' eternal regions. PAR. LOST.

— Their *golden harps* they took,
Harps *ever tun'd*, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony, they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high ;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part ; such concord is in heaven.

IBID.

The

The last matter I desire your attendance to, is the Doctor's play on the word *touch*. See page 87, small edit. After observing that the christian's triumph arises solely from the sacrifice of our Saviour, he says,

Touch'd by the cross, we live; or, more than die;
That *touch* which *touch'd* not angels; more divine
Than that, which *touch'd* confusion into form,
And darkness into glory; partial *touch*!
That *touch* which charms, &c.

It seems scarce possible that the same writer should in the same breath, as it were, be so very great, and so very little. What a tissue of silk and stuff is the composition before us? Alas, Archibald, the best of us are but men, and the wisest have their proportion of weakness.

Farewell.

Your Affectionate,

EPISTLE

1875
The first thing I did when I came to the world was to look at the people. I saw a lot of people who were very different from me. I saw people who were very rich and people who were very poor. I saw people who were very kind and people who were very cruel. I saw people who were very smart and people who were very stupid. I saw people who were very beautiful and people who were very ugly. I saw people who were very good and people who were very bad. I saw people who were very happy and people who were very sad. I saw people who were very strong and people who were very weak. I saw people who were very brave and people who were very cowardly. I saw people who were very honest and people who were very dishonest. I saw people who were very kind and people who were very cruel. I saw people who were very smart and people who were very stupid. I saw people who were very beautiful and people who were very ugly. I saw people who were very good and people who were very bad. I saw people who were very happy and people who were very sad. I saw people who were very strong and people who were very weak. I saw people who were very brave and people who were very cowardly. I saw people who were very honest and people who were very dishonest.

I saw a lot of people who were very different from me. I saw people who were very rich and people who were very poor. I saw people who were very kind and people who were very cruel. I saw people who were very smart and people who were very stupid. I saw people who were very beautiful and people who were very ugly. I saw people who were very good and people who were very bad. I saw people who were very happy and people who were very sad. I saw people who were very strong and people who were very weak. I saw people who were very brave and people who were very cowardly. I saw people who were very honest and people who were very dishonest.

I saw a lot of people who were very different from me. I saw people who were very rich and people who were very poor. I saw people who were very kind and people who were very cruel. I saw people who were very smart and people who were very stupid. I saw people who were very beautiful and people who were very ugly. I saw people who were very good and people who were very bad. I saw people who were very happy and people who were very sad. I saw people who were very strong and people who were very weak. I saw people who were very brave and people who were very cowardly. I saw people who were very honest and people who were very dishonest.

1875

Your friend

EPISTLE X.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE FIFTH,

EPISTLE X.

CHRISTIAN

ON

NIGHT THE FIRST

E P I S T L E X.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T T H E F I F T H.

THE Poem entitled the Relapse, is very soon dispatched. The first point to be mentioned, is our Author's Eulogy on *Night*, which in all moral respects, he prefers to the *Day*: From a number of verses on this subject I have quoted the most valuable, the rest are either dissonant or trifling, or echoes of what was said before.

Virtue, for ever frail, as fair, below,
 Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
 Nor touches on the world, without a stain :
 The world's infectious ; few bring back at eve,

K

Imma-

Immaculate, the manners of the morn.

.

Nor is it strange : Light, motion, concourse, noise,
All, scatter us abroad :—————

Night is fair virtue's immemorial friend ;
The conscious moon, thro' ev'ry distant age,
Has held a lamp to wisdom—————

The world excluded, every passion hush'd,
And open'd a calm intercourse with heaven,
Here the soul sits in council, &c.

The subjects of Night the Fifth are, the birth of suicide, the importance of contemplations on death, the various sources of grief, the faults of age, and the character of death. That gloom, that pensive temper which breathes through all the writings of Young, is here forcibly described by himself.

The man how blest, who, sick of gaudy scenes,
Is led by *choice* to take his *fav'rite* walk,
Beneath death's gloomy, silent cypress shades,
Unpierc'd by vanity's fantastic ray ;
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,
Visit his vaults, and *dwell* amongst the tombs.

These

These pleasures will appear to your youth of a melancholy colour, but they nevertheless characterise the genius of this poet excellently. I have heard, Archibald, a lady who long possessed his friendship, and indeed who lived in the same town with him, assert, these sort of amusements were dearer to him than any other ; that he wrote from his own feelings, and that he has been frequently known to sit whole nights, in the drear of winter, upon one of the tombs in his Parish Church at Welwyn, in Hertfordshire. A strange propensity ! And surely the religion which smiles, at noon-day, is more natural to man, and more acceptable to his Maker, than that which, rejecting the comforts of sleep and society, wraps itself up in the murky terrors of midnight. Nor is it I believe *true*, that night is more the friend of virtue than day. To the moralist it may, but to mankind in general, and within cities in particular, it is perhaps directly the reverse.

“Darkness, the curtain drops o’er life’s dull scene”

Says the Doctor,—true, but should he take a peep *behind* that curtain, he would possibly no longer imagine it was either the reign of virtue, or of reason. The following couplet is however both beautiful and true.

* Night is the *good man’s* friend, and guardian too,
It no less rescues virtue, than inspires.

The *good* man, may, undoubtedly, steal from the noise and nonsense of the world by day, or from his chamber in the night, and turn to the best advantage the precious moments of *both*; allowing neither to business or sleep, a greater proportion of time than is rationally requisite.

* Virgil has been eminently happy in his descriptions of night.—Observe his harmonious versification, and the propriety of his images :

Nox erat, et placidum carpebant fessa soporem
Corpora per terras ; silvæque et sæva quierant
Æquore : cum medio volvuntur sidera lapsu ;
Cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes, pietæque volucres, !
Quæque lacus latè liquidos, quæque aspera dumis
Rura tenent ; somno positæ sub nocte silenti
Lenibant curas, et corda oblita laborum.

But

But darkness to the mind of Dr. Young, had it seems, more divinity than daylight; and some of his sentiments are so extremely fable, that they remind one of Lady Macbeth's gloomy invocations :

—————Come thick night
And pall me in thy *dunnest smoak* !

If however you would see the melancholy pleasures contrasted with the more chearful and spirited ones, I must refer you to those admirable performances of Milton under the title of *Il Penseroso* and *L'Allegro*, from which, a critic says, he can better judge of the Author's poetry than from his *Paradise Lost*. See with what ingenuity, a true poet, can like a true politician or lawyer, talk on both sides of the question : At the same time, fail not to observe the images and epithets, especially those I have touch'd with a stroke of emphasis.

L'ALLEGRO.

Hence loathed melancholy,
 Of Cerberus, and blackest midnight born
 In Stygian cave forlorn,
 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks and sighs *unholy*
 Find out some uncouth cell,
 Where *brooding* darkness spreads his *jealous* wings,
 And the night raven sings, &c.

.

IL PENSEROSO.

O sweetest melancholy;
 Welcome, with folded arms and eyes,
 A sigh, that piercing mortifies;
 A tongue, chain'd up without a sound;
 A look, that's fast'ned to the ground;
 Fountain heads, &c.

What variety, what colouring, what
 imagination! But the whole will afford
 delight of the highest kind: Yet as I do
 not mean to fill paper with meagre quo-
 tations, but to turn every one of them to
double advantage, and, while I entertain
 you by the sentiments, endeavour to in-
 struct you by the criticisms, I shall make the
 above

above extract subservient to my purpose of shewing you the ill effect of bad rhimes. “Sighs *unholy*” is a terrible rhyme to “loathed *melancholy* ;” eyes, and *mortifies*, is little better. This carelessness is indeed more pardonable in this species of versification than any other. It is a licence we laugh at in such a poem as *Hudibras*, but to such a poem we should certainly limit that licence. Some of our celebrated *ode writers* are nevertheless frequently *Hudibrastic*.

She came upon him in his *wooden*
Magician’s circle, on the *sudden*
As spirits do to a *conjurer*
When in their dreadful shapes th’ *appear*.

HUDIBRAS.

This you say is ludicrous enough; what will you say when I inform you that an elegant pen has admitted the following rhimes: *tongue, song; ear, despair; sighs, simpathies; spares, tears; rod, blood; lord, sword; gone, Babylon; dry, captivity*. Even Pope, with all his correct-

ness, is often found tripping in this respect. I insert a few, from many instances; *skill, quadrille; heirs, ears; rule, fool; pelf, himself; joins, mines; ease, provinces; great, complete; road, God; sense, benevolence; force, horse; ail them, Balaam; seen, within; short, court; one, Vernon*. Pure rhimes are indispenfible to a polish'd ear, especially where there is the least pretensions to seriousness; but we see they are not sufficiently chaste, in the *best* performances.—Accuracy in this particular, is in the present age indispenfible, I shall perhaps again take occasion to introduce it.

There is something exceedingly pretty and affecting in the sequent reflections.

Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;
 Her *moral* stone; few Doctor's preach so well;
 Few orators so tenderly can touch
 The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!
 What grave prescribes the best? A friend's; and yet,
 From a friend's grave, how soon we disengage!
 Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.

An

An instance Archibald is just at hand, wherein you will perceive an apt simile totally destroyed by pursuing the allusion *too far*. It was one of our Author's maxims, I suppose, that he could never give his readers "*too much* of a good thing." 'Tis an axiom however which frequently hurts both the moral and poetical character. In all things, there is a criterion, a moment beyond which, it is wrong to proceed.

Life glides away, LORENZO ! like a brook ;

For ever changing, *unperceiv'd* the change.

In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice :

To the same life none ever twice awoke.

We call the brook the same ; the same we think

Our life, tho' still more rapid in its flow ;

Nor mark the *much* irrevocably laps'd,

And mingled with the sea.

That *much*, is vile, but had the Author stopt here it was certainly a good simile, and in some parts strikingly apposite ; the continuation of it however, tho' florid and shewy, is in truth but a poor and puerile effort.

—Or

———Or shall we say
 (Retaining still the brook to bear us on)
 That life is like a vessel on the stream?
 In time embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
 Of life descend, but not on time intent;
 Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave;
 Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
 We start, awake, look out; what see we there?
 Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Thus, Archibald, before the Doctor
 would be quiet, he went with the water
 of the brook down the main stream, till
 wading out of his depth, into the channel
 of the ocean, he wreckt both his genius
 and his simile, not only on the land of
 Ghosts, but on the rocks of allegory. A
 pure, apt, concise simile is delightful; of
 this kind are the following:

———She never told her love
 But let *concealment*, like a worm i'th' bud,
 Feed on her damask cheek.

———She sat
 Like *patience* on a monument
 Smiling at grief. —————

SHAKESPEAR.

Our

Our birth is nothing but our death *begun* ;
As tapers waste, the *instant* they take fire.
YOUNG.

But I forgot, you are well read in the works of Homer, whose similes are for the most part admirable.—Take care you do not at any time use words or phrases below the dignity of verse or your subject. What ear can bear these vulgarities ?

Half round the globe the tears *pump* up by death,
Are spent in wat'ring vanities of life.
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our *swine-enjoyments* from the mire,

Dr. Young has very ingeniously and accurately exhibited the various *arts* of death ; those arts, by which he triumphs over mortality.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep ?
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
In deep dissimulation's darkest night.

.

He takes all shapes that serve his black designs :

.

Like

Like Nero, he's a fidler, charioteer,
Or drives his phaëton, in female guise;
He most affects the forms least like himself,
—————Hence burly corpulence
Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.
Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,
Or ambush in a smile.—————

The advice to Lorenzo, deduced from these remarks, is not only excellently written, but deserves frequently to be contemplated. I do not believe there is a finer passage in the whole work.

And now, LORENZO, dost thou wrap thy soul
In soft security, because unknown
Which moment is commission'd to destroy?
In death's *uncertainty* thy *danger* lies.
Fixt as a centinel, all eye, all ear,
All expectation of the coming foe.
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear;
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,
And fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong;
Thus give *each day* the merit, and renown,
Of dying well; tho' doom'd but once to die.
Nor let life's *period* hidden (as from most)
Hide too from thee the precious *use* of life.

Besides

Besides the great *truths* in these sentiments, the poetry is noble, and the idea of the centinel standing in preparation under arms, is an instance of our Author's skill when genius was not too violent to be manag'd. Nothing will give greater splendor to your arguments than the introduction of such allusions; tho' I must confess it requires no small judgement to introduce them gracefully. Let the above, be, as to the *manner*, in some sort a standard to you. What follows is only inferior. It has even an air of Shakespear in the language.

O how portentous is prosperity !
 How, comet-like, it threatens, while it shines !
 Few years but yield us proof of death's ambition,
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
 And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
 With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss,
 Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
 The gaudy centre, of the public eye,
 When fortune thus has tofs'd her child in air,
 Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state,

How

How often have I seen him dropt at once,
Our morning's envy ! and our ev'ning's sigh !

Soon after these lines you will see some satirical thoughts on the love of gold, but all that ever was said on this subject in our language, and perhaps in any other, comes infinitely short of Shakespear's sentiments in his Tragedy of Timon. After you have read our Author's remarks, beginning at

Gold glitters most, where virtue shines no more,

Page 128, small edition,

read this extract ;

Gold, yellow, glittering, precious gold ;
Gold that will make black, white ; foul, fair ;
wrong, right ;
Base, noble ; old, young ; coward, valiant ;
Ha ! you Gods ! why this
Will lug your priests and servants from your sides,
Pluck stout mens pillows from below their heads !
This yellow slave
Will knit, and break religions ; bless th' accurs'd ;
Make the hoar leprosy ador'd ; place thieves
And give them title, knee and approbation,
With senators on the Bench.

In

In the close of Night the Fifth, you will meet with a pretty little episode, instancing the uncertainty of Life in the Deaths of Lyfander and Aspasia.

Lyfander, happy past the common lot,
Was warn'd of danger, &c.—

The fate of these young people naturally brings again to the mind of the Author, the loss of his Narcissa.—The manner in which the book (in consequence of these reflections) finishes, most pathetically speaks the parent and the poet.

—————When such friends part,
'Tis the survivor dies—My heart, no more. *

Here is a happiness dictated by the soul; it is nature relaxes the nerve that sustained the pen. Such strokes have a surprizing effect. I will conclude my letter here on
purpose

* Thomson has something similar to this in his story of Celadon, and Amelia; their fates were indeed different, but equally sudden.

purpose to give you an opportunity to read the whole passage connectedly, that you may the more fully enjoy it.

Your's, truly,

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XI.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHTS THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH.

L

EPISCOPAL

CHURCH

OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

E P I S T L E XI.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

NIGHTS THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH.

WE are now come, Sir, to a very important part of the work. The *Infidel Reclaim'd*, was originally published by itself, at least I have seen the two poems on this subject bound up singly in quarto. They contain the nature, proof, and importance of *Immortality*: To each is a preface, which will assist you in the arguments; the arguments themselves, are for the most part masterly, frequently new, and always rational: The Sixth Night seems to be the best written,

L 2

but

but both are, upon the whole, highly deserving your study. Where the arguments are so connected, and have such a dependence each on the other, it prevents any partial abstract, and I am unwilling to maim them by imperfect quotations. I would refer you to the original, and have you set apart a *whole day* to read and reflect on these two books, after which, I am persuaded you will be both the better and the wiser. I forbear to make any little notes on objectable passages on this part, lest I should interrupt you either in the progress or pleasure of reading: For, in truth, there is so much weight, and consequence; of moment, and of morality, that I cannot persuade myself to destroy their effect upon you, by an attention to trifles. I shall therefore mark a few moral, and poetical passages and then leave you to let the Doctor speak for himself. Criticism shall be suspended.

In what an animated manner the poet vindicates the dignity of his subject?

In

In empire high, or in proud science deep,
Ye born of earth ! on what can you confer,
With half the dignity, with half the gain,
The gust, the glow of rational delight,
As on *this* theme, which angels praise and share ?
Man's fates and favours are a theme in heaven.

What a noble reflection is the following ?

If *prone* in thought, our stature is our shame ;
And man should blush, his forehead meets the skies.

Talents without any valuable qualities
in the mind are here finely treated.

Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,
Our height is but the *gibbet* of our name.
A celebrated wretch when I behold,
When I behold a genius bright, and base,
Of tow'ring talents and terrestrial aims ;
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,
With rubbish mixt, and' glitt'ring in the dust.

————— Talents angel-bright,
If wanting worth, are shining instruments
In false ambition's hand, to finish faults
Illustrious, and give infamy renown.

Thus Mr. Pope too,

Fame, but from death, a villain's name can save,
As justice tears his body from the grave ;
When what t'oblivion better were consign'd
Is *hung* on high, to poison half mankind:

Essay on Man.

Again

Honour and shame from no *condition* rise,
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

The Same.

It is the intention of our poet to shew the ineffectuality, and vanity, of all those things, which are most apt to captivate the partialities of men, to shew the poverty of wealth and ignominy of glory, if I may so term it, when a passion for either the one or the other, is founded merely on sublunary satisfactions. Thus ambition, genius, &c. are considered: The poet artfully points out *false* ambition, *false* genius, &c. and then proceeds to discover by what methods and from what views, even the lowest passion, that of *avarice*, may not only become

come innocent, but promote the great and pillar-like proofs of immortality. Pope has nearly the same design, in his *Essay on Man*. It will be, not only extremely amusing, but equally instructive to see how these two great Authors manage a similar subject. At this time of day, it is almost impossible to hit upon a quite new theme: At least, all the *grand* subjects, poetical, philosophical and moral, are pre-occupied. Men of genius and learning, have been for a length of years, I might say of ages, writing, thinking, and publishing for the entertainment, and instruction of their fellow creatures; and, in the course of those endeavours, sentiment must naturally have been ranfack'd. The present writers therefore must for the most part, be contented with the secondary praises of science: The palm of perfect originality must certainly be yielded to our predecessors; the *first* applause is on that account, theirs: But *manner* and *language*, may ever be in some respect, new, diversified, and various. If you cannot

frequently produce an original idea, your ingenuity may at least set it off to better advantage by a modern dress: If the *grand* topics are chiefly exhausted, there are many collateral ones of great importance and peculiar delicacy. Perhaps, the Bible in divinity, Shakespear in poetry, and the Spectator in wit and morality; (not to step out of the language I have in these letters confin'd myself to) have furnished a literary treasury, whence every sterling sentiment, and every shining thought may be drawn, for either the use, or decoration of life. But what of that, new talents are constantly springing up, and it is the duty of their possessors, to cultivate them with all possible diligence. If Shakespear, Milton, and Dryden, dignified one age, Pope, Addison, and Swift, dignified another; and notwithstanding *all* these have many thoughts, intrinsically speaking, *alike*, yet sufficient novelty of expression or of manner, is left, to give to each, a very splendid reputation; and this will always be the case. Style and expres-
sion

sion admit endless and everlasting variety; and although Addison has left behind him a system of morals, the writings of the Author of the Rambler accommodate us with another system of them. Swift and Congreve had wit and humour, and a taste for criticism, yet they hurt not the brilliancy of Kenrick or Sterne, and many other illustrious characters of the present times. Nay, it is even possible for a writer to be in fact an original, though he obtains not the fame of originality. This seeming paradox is soon explained. The Author of the Spectator, and the Author of the Rambler, pursuing a similar subject, will naturally, if not inevitably, have some ideas and sentiments the same; nay sometimes the same language, I should say, *expression*, not indeed verbatim, but like, on the whole. Neither are, however, plagiaries; for possibly Johnson at the time of his writing on the same subject which has been before contemplated by Addison, may not recollect a single sentiment of the paper, wherein that subject is treated.

But I am searching for illustrations abroad,
when I have one of the strongest imagin-
able before me. Mr. Pope and Dr. Young
will assist us on this occasion Archibald.
One example is already given; see the last
quotations. Of Fame, says

Y O U N G,

And chase we still the phantom thro' the fire!

.

The *momentary* buzz, of vain renown;

A *name*, a mortal immortality!

On the same subject, says,

P O P E,

—— The *whistling* of a name,

ESSAY.

How vain that second life in others *breath*?

TEMPLE OF FAME.

Of Greatness it is the opinion of

Y O U N G,

1 *High worth* is elevated place——

2 Makes *more than monarchs*, makes an *honest man*.

3 Hearts are proprietors of all applause.

4 *Means* have no merit, if our *end* amiss,

If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain.

On

On this head it is the maxim of

P O P E,

1 (Look next on greatness ; say where greatness lies)

Virtue alone has *Majesty* below.

2 An *honest* man's the *noblest* work of God.

Worth makes the man.—————

4 Who wickedly is *wise*, or madly brave,
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave ;
Who noble *ends*, by noble *means* obtains
Or failing, smiles, in exile or in chains,
That man, is great indeed !—————

Here the *thoughts* (not to speak of *words*) are extremely similar, yet there is neither borrowing or stealing in the case ; both have their beauty, both their share of reputation. Be not therefore dejected : Never despair of producing acceptable pieces : The oldest subject may receive new graces, at least you may constantly make it *look* new, and from that novelty will arise to your readers considerable pleasure.

sure. * Remember, that stile, precision, correctness, delicacy, and manner, are always before you; and with a rich imagination, solid judgement, and a fine taste, what improvements may not be made? Genius and industry—'tis pity they are not oftner united, should never be dejected. I once more charge you to give full measure of attention to the two books of the *Infidel Reclaim'd*: Peruse them first with a view to their moral, then to their poetical importance; and when you come to consider them critically, as compositions, pray look into the latter part of Pope's *Essay on Man*, † where you will see *more fully*, how possible it is for the best poets, to resemble one another, without sinking into

* Notwithstanding it must be allowed that many instances, like those above quoted, occur in various compositions, yet, I conceive, it would neither be unpleasant or unuseful to enter into a severe literary scrutiny on this matter: For instance, fix upon any particular sentiment, in any particular Author, as a *given subject*, and then, in the course of your reading the best books, mark down with a pencil, from time to time, every *similar* sentiment you find in different writers.——By such a method you would not only see how great wits jump, and little ones creep, but acquire a mode of reading advantageously.

† It may be of service to you to read Dr. Young's *Thoughts on Original Composition*.——

into the slaveries of imitation ! If in this survey, you will shew me, in which parts you *discover* that resemblance, it will give me great pleasure : An accurate critic, though he cannot make, will always much assist an Author, and your skill in deciding on the writings of others, will not a little help your judgement in reviewing and correcting your own. One *finished* couplet, bids fairer for immortality, than fifty folios of crude, and precipitate efforts. I again observe to you, how amazing an instance of this is Mr. Pope ; and if Shakespear, the astonishing Shakespear, is an instance to the contrary, *he* had a genius that makes amends for all irregularity, and is perhaps the one glorious exception to the great general rule. Keep your piece nine years, I still say, with Horace, rather than trust it to the perils of the public *nine moments*, too soon. I leave these salutary monitions to your understanding, and am

Your's ever,

P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T.

I have left unquoted a great number of sentiments, of peculiar splendour, because I have been led into somewhat a different, tho' I trust, not less useful part of my subject. But I dare say, when you read the poems, few of their beauties will escape you. What I should have transcribed, however, as remarkable efforts of our Author's muse, are passages to which a couple of lines will direct you,

His definition of false and true *ambition*, page 147, small edition. Of *Wealth*, page 149. Of *Competence*, page 152. Of *Universal Revolution*, page 158. Of the various *Works* of Mankind, page 161. &c. and of *That Hope*, " which nothing can defeat, p. 219. The passage *last* alluded to, I cannot even now quit without making

making a transcript of it. As to the main argument of the poems in point, I say no more : They will not fail to touch you intimately. Now for the extract.

This hope is earth most estimable prize :
 This is man's portion, while no more than man :
 Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here ;
 Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
 Joy has her tears ; and transport has her death ;
 Hope, like a cordial, innocent, tho' strong,
 Man's heart, at once, inspirits, and serenes ;
 Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys ;
 'Tis all our present state can safely bear,
 Health to the frame ! and vigour to the mind !
 A joy attemper'd ! a chastis'd delight !
 Like the fair summer evening, mild, and sweet !
 'Tis man's full cup ; his Paradise below.

Cowley has many beautiful sentiments on this subject, which at a future opportunity, I shall delight to shew you.

Adieu.

Αντίστοιχα

EPISTLE XII.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

M

THE LIST

THE LIST

E P I S T L E XII.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T T H E E I G H T H.

HAVING in Nights the Sixth and Seventh, proved by a swarm of irresistible arguments the *Immortality* of man, the poet now proceeds to advise the libertine Lorenzo, to take care he is immortally *happy*. To be immortal is rather a curse than blessing, unless our conduct, entitles us to expect bliss in it, and bliss eternal. He says,

And *is thy soul immortal?*—What remains?

All, all, Lorenzo!—Make immortal, blest.

M 2

He

He examines the general notions of men of the world, as to happiness allegorically, by comparing life to the ocean, and mankind to the adventurers. On this sea, he observes, all are bound for happiness.

A troubled ocean, spread
 With bold adventurers, their *all* on board ;
 Of various rates they sail,
 Of ensigns various ; all alike in this,
 All restless, anxious ; tost with hopes, and fears,
 In calmest skies, &c.

This allegoric method he ingeniously pursues a great while, entering into the various designs that engage us in the voyage of human life. There is an allegory or vision of this kind likewise somewhere in the Rambler, highly worth your reading ; but in my opinion none of our moderns have more ably, or indeed more masterly touched upon the subject of happiness, than Kenrick in his Philosophical and Poetical Epistles to Lorenzo ; a work of great wit, shrewdness, and reasoning : But at present it requires
 too

too much application for you. Its nature and design have already been mistaken, by precipitate and careless readers. The fifth epistle however you shall see soon; we will read it, side by side, the very next time I can escape from **** to *****. In the interim, to gratify in some degree, your curiosity (though it will only give you an impatient relish for *more*) take the following verses on our present subject.

* Go, ask my friend, from door to *door*,
The high, the low, the rich, the *poor* ;

In

* Though it is evident the author, in his Epistles to Lorenzo, was, as he says in his preface, above the pride of petty accomplishments, (amongst which he seems to reckon ease in his versification) yet, you will observe in that work, and in the present quotation, uncommon purity in the rhimes, and peculiar harmony in the periods. Dr. Kenrick, perhaps, wishes to attach his readers rather by the force of his philosophy, than by the sweetness of his poetry. Be this as it may; I doubt not, the delicacy of his *sound*, not a little attracts us to the energy of his *sense*. I have distinguished the last word in every line by *italics*, on purpose that you may take note of the effect of a *good* rhyme: And I desire you will observe the *following* quotation, for the very contrary reason, viz. that you may *feel* the awkwardness and inelegance of *bad* rhimes.

Now at the time, and in th' appointed place,
The challenger and challeng'd, face to face
Approach.

In court, or cot, if here, or *there*,
 Reside the mortal free from *care*.
 You ask in vain, for joy and *strife*,
 Diversify *all* states of *life*.
 To weild the scythe with sweaty *brow*,
 With wearied arm to guide the *plough*;
 To sow in hope, and reap in *joy*
 Thine labour, is the sweet *employ*.
 A life of rest with pain t'*endure*,
 To seek in health diseases *cure*;
 To eat the grape, unprun'd the *vine*,
Laborious idleness, is *thine*:
 Yet Idleness of Care *complains*,
 And Labour quarrels with its *pains*.

So stands the Thracian herdsman with his *spear*,
 Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted *bear*;
 And thinks, here comes my mortal *enemy*,
 And either he must fall in fight, or *I*.
 Thus, two long hours in equal arms they *stood*,
 And wounded wound, till both were bath'd in *blood*.
 Fell Arcite, like an angry tyger *far'd*,
 And like a lyon, Palemon *appear'd*;
 Or as two boars
 Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique they *wound*,
 With grunts and groans the forest rings *around*.
 ————— So they *strook*,
 There seem'd a less force requir'd to fell an *oak*.

DRYDEN.

Men-

Mention has been already made in the course of the Complaint of two persons under the signatures of Clarissa and Florella, the first of whom appears to have been the wife of Lorenzo, the second his son. Clarissa, seems by this passage to have died in childbed. They are now again introduced, and to a very pathetic purpose. Our author takes a distinct survey of the miseries of life, in order to wean Lorenzo from the love of the world, by bringing some of its artifices home immediately to his bosom, as to the bosom of a father. I shall abridge it, perhaps without injury to the whole, because what I leave out may, I believe, be very well dispens'd with.

Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold
 The best that can befall the best on earth;
 Florella lately cast on this rude coast
 A helpless infant.—
 O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns!
 Needful austerities his will restrain;
 As thorns fence in, the tender plant from harm.
 As yet, his *reason* cannot go *alone*;

But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.
The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale;
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye;
His harmless eye! and drowns an angel there.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright;
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
He leaps inclosure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years toil,
Like antient Troy; and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world's a tutor more severe;
Its lessons hard, and ill deserves his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,
Or books (fair Virtue's advocate's!) inspir'd.

Men of the world;———
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
And, in their hospitable arms, inclose.
See, the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace;
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off;
All their keen purpose, in politeness, sheath'd:
Stung out of all, most amiable in life,
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles un-
feign'd;
Affection, as his species, wide-diffus'd;

Noble

Noble presumptions to mankind's renown :
 Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy, &c.

You will read from hence to

Heav'nly talents make infernal hearts,

with the greatest pleasure. Indeed, there are many admirable sentiments in the Eighth Night. You will find therein many concise poetical maxims, comprized, as all maxims ought to be, in a few words. The Proverbs of Solomon are chiefly confined to one pithy sentence, and that sentence, short. Of late, this way of writing has been much practised. Young however is, in general, a diffuse writer, his terseness will therefore be the more pleasing. Horace and Pope have been celebrated for the *multum in parvo*: Let us do justice to *our* poet; going no further than the Night under consideration.

I. I give

1. I give him joy that's *awkward* at a lye.
2. 'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise.
3. You say, the world, well-known, will make a
man :—

The world, well-known, will give our hearts to
Heaven,

Or make us dæmons, long *before* we die.

4. From purity of thought, all *pleasure* springs;
And, from an humble spirit, all our *peace*.
5. All the distinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the *man*.
6. ———— *That* man greatly lives,
Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies.
7. Who court applause, oblige the world in this;
They gratify man's passion, to *refuse*.
8. Superior honour, when *assum'd*, is *lost*.

I could fill many pages in transcribing
and culling axioms of this kind : But I
mean only to give *hints*, and leave the
improvement of them to your own dis-
cernment and industry. There seem to
be as few faults in *Virtue's Apology*, as in
any Night throughout the work. It
abounds

abounds with great thoughts, splendid expressions, devout observations, and masterly arguments; and is likewise, I think, more harmonious in the versification than any of the foregoing contemplations. Some passages may be enrolled amongst the beauties of sacred poetry. Our Author's account of the purpose, nature, and parentage of Pleasure is pregnant with capital strokes.

No man e'er found a happy life by chance;
Or yawn'd it into being with a wish.

.
An art it is, and must be learnt; and learnt
With unremitting effort, or be lost;
And leave us perfect blockheads, in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates;
Wealth may seek us; but Wisdom must be sought;
&c. &c. &c.

See Page 244, &c. &c.

There is a spirit, and even sprightliness, in the subsequent eulogy on rational joy, not often indulged by Dr. Young.

Young. The sentiment is as just, as the language is animated.

“ Rejoice for ever :” It becomes a man ;
Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.
“ Rejoice for ever,” *Nature* cries, “ Rejoice ;”
And drinks to man, in her nectareous cup,
Mixt up of delicates for ev’ry sense ;
To the great Founder of the bounteous feast,
Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise ;
And he that will not pledge her, is a churl.
Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,
Is the whole science of felicity :
What reason bids, God bids ; by *his* command
How aggrandiz’d, the smallest thing we do !

What a compliment doth the Poet pay
to Virtue.

Virtue’s foundations with the world’s were laid ;
Heav’n mixt her with our make, and twist’d close
Her sacred int’rests with the strings of life.

But here Mr. Pope’s admirable sentiments must not be forgotten : As this letter is devoted almost totally to moral quotations, I cannot enrich it more, than
by

by adding what follows. By the bye, quotations and extracts from great writers, judiciously selected, will surprizingly improve your stile, and promote your taste. *Transcribing* with your pen, from such writers, will do you more good, than such a trifling circumstance seems to promise. There is a great deal in habit, even in composition: And genius without skill, is merely a horse of spirit, without a bridle. In a word, you cannot too intimately acquaint yourself with the works of the *best* authors. I speak to you always in plain language, because I mean rather to be useful than ornamental. Now for the quotation, which has indeed been quoted a thousand times. May *your* future compositions deserve the same echoes of celebrity!

Know then this truth, enough for man to know,

* Virtue alone, is happiness below.

The only point where human bliss stands still,

And tastes the good, without the fall to ill;

* This line is *constructed* like

Virtue alone, has majesty in death.

Where

Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives ;
The joy unequal'd, if it ends in gain,
And if it lose, attended with no pain
Without satiety, tho' e'er so blest,
And but more relish'd, as the more distrest.

* The broadest mirth, unfeeling folly wears,
Less pleasing far, than Virtue's very tears.

Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd ;
Never elated while one man's oppress'd,
Never dejected while another's blest.

And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more Virtue, is to gain.

After this, you will the better relish
Dr. Young's character of a real christian,
for which, turn to page 260.

With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
&c. &c.

* It sometimes happens that an alliterated syllable in the middle of a word has a good effect.

The broadest mirth, *unfeeling* folly wears.

Unfeeling, is here perhaps, better than any other word that could be found: Substitute any word in its stead, and you will find none so agreeable to your ear.

He

[175]

He is somewhat too prolix on this subject; and you will find some inferior thoughts, others uncommonly brilliant. Upon the fertile theme of *wit*, I can recollect nothing in our language better than our Author's definition: But to spare writing, turn to page 266.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
&c. &c.

I am, dear Archibald,

Ever your's, &c.

E P I S T L E

He is somewhat too proud on this
subject, and you will find some inferior
thoughts, others (unusually) brilliant.
Upon the whole those of our I can re-
collect nothing in our language better
than our author's style. But to give
nothing, then to give too.

I was very much interested in
the book, and I have read it
with great pleasure.

I am, dear Anselm,
very truly,
Your friend,
J. W. F.

I have been thinking of you
very much lately, and I hope
you are well.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XIII.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE NINTH.

N

EPISTLE XIII

CRITIQUE

NIGHT THE NINTH

[179]

E P I S T L E XIII.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T THE N I H T H.

OUR observations, my dear Archibald, are drawing to a period, and I feel already, that I shall take leave both of them and you with much reluctance. Our correspondence, tho' short, has I trust, not been unendearing or unimportant : We have been socially considering a very amiable and virtuous composition : A composition, as has been noted before, prolific of the most instructive and entertaining remarks. The Complaint, is not unlike a large and cultivated garden, where however, in despite of culture, some weeds will spring up amongst the flowers ;

N 2

nay,

may, where the very flowers themselves occasionally spread their sweets too luxuriantly; the spot is indeed upon the whole delightful, breathing perfumes, blooming in variety, and rich in fruits: Even the weeds and pruriences are only so many evidences of the fertility of the soil, and the natural goodness of the ground; and although we are somewhat distressed in a curious survey, to observe here and there a plant or excrescence unworthy their situation, yet we admire, *in general*, the diligence of the gardener, and the elegant taste of the proprietor; nor can we quit the scene without a sigh; especially when such a companion as my Archibald has been the companion of the ramble.

Night the Ninth, as it is the last, so is it by much the longest of the work, and considered together, not inferior to the former parts. It is chiefly argumentative, and it is not very easy to unite argument and poetry. Poetry certainly has a fairer chance to delight in works of fancy, and
argu-

argument in matters of fact. The spirit of poetry is imagination and fable; the spirit of argument is *Truth*, simple, single Truth. Poetry is the product of genius. Argument is the department of judgement. Not but poetical images, like elegant dresses, are often an advantage to the native beauty; and some of our best compositions, I mean our most sacred ones likewise, the Scriptures for instance, owe half their influence, perhaps more, to those sublimities, of language, and poetic simplicity in which the greatest and noblest truths are conveyed. But still, imagination is more immediately natural to the genius of poetry; and in support of this I might quote Shakespear, Milton, and every successful poet ancient and modern, in our language and in every other. † Imagination may be allowed to decorate truth, and

† I am not considering whether imagination or argument be the more valuable; because, whether Fact is to be prefer'd to Fable, (for that is the point) is too obvious for enquiry: What is here attempted, is merely to shew, that works of fancy, rather than of system and argument, are more congenial to the lively nature, and, if I may so say, the constitution and temper of poetry.

and therefore Truth and Poetry are often friends. But yet, argument allows very circumscribed decorations, in comparison of those airy and animated effusions, which flow warm and wild from the true poetical heart.

A poet who stands at the very top of Parnassus, is not only in himself an *instance* of the truth of this opinion, but even expresses it in words :

The poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rowling,
Doth glance from earth to Heaven, from Heav'n
to earth ;
And as *imagination* bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shape, and gives to airy *nothing*
A local habitation, and a name.

Perhaps it is not possible to unite the argumentative with the poetical in any composition, the Scriptures excepted ; they are always an exception, in a greater degree, than we find them in the Essay on Man. Bolingbroke's philosophy is embellished

bellished with Pope's poetry ; and it must be confest, that virtue always rises in her charms, and seems indeed to assume new and more resistless attractions, when she comes innocently arrayed in the robes of poesy ; when her language is more lofty, and her voice more melodious. Prophet and poet were you know once the same thing ; yet still I must insist, that Fancy is the field for poetry to expatiate in. If she delights in the friendship of Truth, she is enchanted and inspired by the endearments of Fancy : It may not be unuseful to you, to illustrate this :

As I have had occasion to mention the Essay on Man and Mr. Pope, let our first examples be derived from his writings. We begin with a quotation of *argument*.

What wou'd this man ? now upward wou'd he soar,
And little less than angel, wou'd be more ;
Now looking downwards just as griev'd *appears*,
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of *bears* ;
Made for his use all creatures if he call,
Say what their use had he the powers of all ?

.

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own,
 Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone?
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not blest with all?

In this, as in fifty other passages, there is a beautiful share of morality and poetry. But pray attend to the voice of the latter in her own province, viz. in a work of imagination—the Rape of the Lock. You are intimate with the poem, and therefore I may spare myself the trouble of references: Select what I will, you will know where about I am.

Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay,
 All but the Sylph;—with careful thoughts oppress'd,
 Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
 He summons strait his denizens of air,
 The lucid squadrons round the sails repair;
 Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,
 That seem'd but Zephyrs to the train beneath;
 Some to the sun their insect wings unfold,
 Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
 Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
 Their flurid bodies half dissolv'd in light.
 &c. &c.

Next

Next their business and pleasures.

Some in the fields of purest æther play,
And bask, and whiten in the blaze of day ;
Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
Or roll the planets thro' the boundless sky ;
Some, less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light,
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night ;
Or search the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow ;
Or brew, &c. &c.

Then the department of others, whose
province it is to attend the ladies.

To save the powder from too rude a gale,
Nor let the imprison'd essences exhale ;
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flowers,
To steal from rainbows e'er they drop in showers
A brighter wash, &c.

Our *ideas* of angelic and infernal na-
tures must be *imaginary*. What in the
world of *argumentative* poetry can equal
the imagery of the following descriptions
of Raphael and Satan, by Milton.

At once, on th' Eastern cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns

A seraph

A seraph wing'd ; six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine ; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament ; the middle pair,
 Girt like a starry zone his waste, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colours dipt in heav'n ; the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feathered mail
 Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide.

The *contrast*, in the person of the Devil,
 not only promotes and corroborates our
 present purpose, but is an evidence of
 Milton's amazing imagination, which
 could, in colours so lively, and in imagery
 so bold and glowing, represent, as best
 suited his design, either an evil Spirit, or
 a Seraph ; an Angel of Light, or a Demon
 of Darkness.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blaz'd his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood.—————

.

Forthwith

Forthwith, upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature: On each hand the flames
Driv'n backwark, slope their pointing spires and
roll'd

In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid vale.

Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air

That felt unusual weight.——

Well might Mr. Addison remark, that Milton triumphs over all the poets both modern and ancient, in the *greatness of his sentiment*; but truly Homer needs not have been excepted. If in point of sublimity, Homer is his *equal*, methinks the compliment is sufficient.

Although I confine these letters, as above hinted, totally to *English* compositions, yet here I cannot resist referring you to an enchanting description of the descent of “Maia's son” in Homer. It is in the 24th Book of his Iliad, ver. 359.

Dr.

Dr. Newton, the editor of *Paradise Lost*, has quoted a literal imitation of it from Virgil. Vide *Æn.* 4. ver. 238.

Dixerat: Ille patris magni parere parabat
Imperio, &c. &c.

The admirable Shakespear, "Fancy's Child," gives us the last instance—one instance out of a thousand Archibald. I fix upon Prospero's abjuration of his art.

* Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and
groves,

And ye, that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune; and do fly him
When he comes back; you demy-puppets, that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you, whose
pastime

Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid
(Weak masters tho' you be) I have bedimm'd
The noon-tide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
Set roaring war; to the dread, rattling thunder

Have

* Though these notions were in some measure collected from the current superstition of the times, yet they certainly derived many additional ornaments from the picturesque description of the poet.

Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
 With his own bolt : The strong-bas'd promontory
 Have I made shake, and by the spurs pluckt up
 The pine, and cedar ; but this rough magic I here
 abjure.

The TEMPEST.

In close of this part of our subject, let me recommend Spencer to your attention : A poet whose fancy and genius will, in spite of certain *obsoletenesses*, be coëval with language and the world.

I have said thus much on the heads of poetry and argument, partly for your sake and partly for our Author's. A large proportion of the Night Thoughts, is employed in such a train of argument as renders poetry almost incompatible : for which reason perhaps, such contemplations should for the most part be contented with prose. Some contend, that blank verse *is* nearly prose ; an assertion, which, were it true, robs the best and greatest writers the world has produced of their pœetic character :

ter : On this principle, Milton, Shakespear, Young, Thomson, &c. &c. are not eminent poets—nay, not poets at all : As if the mere ding-dong of rhyme, or echo of sounds, were the only characteristics of poetry. At this rate also Shakespear is prosaic, and Sternhold is poetical ! Preposterous ! Of this enough. The further scrutiny of our Author's last book shall be the subject of another letter from, dear Archibald,

Your most sincere

And affectionate,

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XIV.

CRITIQUE

ON

NIGHT THE NINTH,

[*Concluded.*]

On this principle, the
the one, the other, the third
the fourth, the fifth, the sixth
the seventh, the eighth, the ninth
the tenth, the eleventh, the twelfth

EPISTILE XIV.

THE FIRST PART OF THE
SECOND PART OF THE
THIRD PART OF THE
FOURTH PART OF THE
FIFTH PART OF THE
SIXTH PART OF THE
SEVENTH PART OF THE
EIGHTH PART OF THE
NINTH PART OF THE
TENTH PART OF THE

NINTH PART OF THE

[Canto]

THE END

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E P I S T L E XIV.

C R I T I Q U E

O N

N I G H T THE N I N T H.

[*Concluded.*]

THE CONSOLATION opens in an interesting manner.

As when a traveller, &c. †

In the middle of the reflections, our Author recites, generally, what has been already sung, and introduces this recitation with an apt allusion : As it will give
you

† As one who in his journey, bates at noon, &c.

PAR. LOST, B. 12. V. 1.

O

you a recapitulatory satisfaction, and refresh in your memory the various subjects which have been contemplated, I will insert the verses here.

As when o'erlaboured, and inclin'd to breathe,
 † A panting traveller, some rising ground,
 Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round,
 And measures with his eye the various vale,
 The fields, woods, meads, and rivers he has past;
 And, fatiate of his journey, thinks of home,
 Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil;
 Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent
 The muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod;
 Various, extensive, beaten but by few;
 And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
 Pause; and with pleasure meditate an end,
 &c.
 Thro' many a field of *moral* and *divine*,
 The muse has stray'd; and much of *sorrow* seen
 In human ways; and much of *false* and *vain*;
 Which none, who travel this bad road, can miss.

O'er

† Mark besides, that it is very ill and careless to suffer accidental rhyme in heroic or blank verse.

A panting traveller some rising ground,
 Some small ascent has gain'd, he turns him round.

By the by, there is in this couplet a second error; for a *rising ground* and a *small ascent*, is mere tautology.

O'er friends deceas'd full heartily she wept ;
 Of love divine, the wonders she display'd ;
 Prov'd man immortal ; shew'd the source of joy ;
 The grand tribunal rais'd ; assign'd the bounds
 Of human grief : In † few, to close the whole,
 The moral muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
 Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke :
 Of most † our weakness needs believe, or do,
 In this our land of travel, and of hope,
 For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

We must now look a little back. The poet enters into a description of the *last day*, in this Night's Contemplation : In his works also you will find another poem on the same subject. In both places the sentiments are devout and noble ; but I believe this important theme has been more *poetically* managed by an Author, who, if I mistake not, is still living--Dr. Oglevie,--vide,--Day of Judgement. There is much grandeur in these *conjectures* of our poet.

At midnight, * when mankind is wrapt in peace,
 And worldly fancy feeds on golden dreams ;
 To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour,
 At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst

O 2

From

† The phrases, *in few*, and *of most*, in this passage are very bad indeed.

* As a thief in the night, &c. say the scriptures.

From tenfold darkness ; sudden, as the spark
 From smitten steel ; from nit'rous grain the blaze.
 Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more !
 The day is broke, which never more shall close !
 Above, around, beneath, amazement all !
 Terror and glory join'd in their extremes !
 Our *God* in grandeur, and our *world* on fire !
 All nature struggling in the pangs of death ! †

The description is here awful, but there is an error in the poetry. I have more than once taken notice of Young's want of skill in arrangement of his images : Another instance is in these lines.

I. Terror

† Having mention'd Dr. Oglevie, let me do him justice by a short quotation.

All wak'd at once, and burst the yielding tomb ;
 O'er the broad deep the loosen'd members swim,
 Each sweeping whirlwind bore the flying limb :
 The living atoms with peculiar care,
 Drawn from their cells, came speeding through the air :
 ——— And now, in fairer prospect shewn,
 Limb clung to limb, and bone rejoin'd to bone :
 There stood, improv'd in strength, the graceful *frame* ;
 Here flow'd the circling blood, a purer *stream* :
 The beaming eye, its dazzling light *resumes*,
 Soft on the lip the tinctur'd ruby *blooms* ;
 The beating pulse a keener ardour warms,
 And beauty triumphs in immortal charms.

2. Terror and glory, join'd in their extremes.
3. Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire.
1. All nature struggling in the pangs of death.

The effect which might have been produced by these verses is ruin'd ; for the last line should, without all question, be first, I mean before the middle one, as I have markt them. The reason is obvious : “ Our God in grandeur”, annihilates every other glory ; even “ Nature struggling in the pangs of death,” and “ our world on fire,” are nothing to it : So that in strict poetical propriety, our God in grandeur ought to close the whole passage : All that can come *after*, even the burning universe, is weak and impotent.

A moral, I might also say an astronomical and philosophical survey, of the * Nocturnal Heavens, is likewise a
part

* Upon *this subject*, I should not fail to recommend to you the moral Meditations of Mr. Hervey, were I not afraid that the strange affectations in his style, would do your genius more harm, than his sentiments could do you good. Mr. Hervey's book is universally known, and very generally read. If *your* curiosity should be interested ; when you have finished it, turn to one of your Spectators, and you will feel the force of the contrast with respect to *manner*, most *powerfully*.

a part of this Night's subject; but the sentiments are chiefly repetitions of what was said in the former books, where Cynthia is so often mention'd, and all her "starry train." The address to Night at the opening of the survey, is finely poetical.

—————O majestic night!

Nature's great ancestor, day's elder born!
And fated to survive the transient sun!
By mortals, and immortals, seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heav'n's loom,
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form; and, heav'n throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train.

As the Doctor in a former book described, and even in this, describes the Night as favourable to virtue and wisdom, let us now see what he says on considering that, it is also favourable to vice and folly.

—————The trembling stars

See, crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,

And

And making night still darker by their deeds.
 Slumb'ring in covert, till the shades descend,
Rapine and *murder*, link't, now prowl for prey.
 The miser earths his treasure ; and the thief,
 Watching the mole, half-beggars him e'er morn.
 Now plots, and foul *conspiracies*, awake ;
 And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
 Havock and devastation they prepare ;
 Now sons of riot in mid-revel, rage.
 And now the rank adulterer ;
 Ascends secure ; and laughs at Gods, and men.

This description confesses a master : If
 I compare it with what follows it ought
indeed to be the work of a master.

———Now o'er one half the world
 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
 The curtain'd sleep ; now witchcraft celebrates
 Pale heart's offerings ; and wither'd murder,
 Alarm'd by his centinel, the wolf,
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
 Moves like a ghost.

SHAKESPEAR.

You will be pleased with the *questions*
 that succeed on the God of Night.

Who turns his eye on nature's midnight face,
 But must enquire—"What hand behind the scene
 "What arm almighty, put these wheeling globes
 "In motion, and wound up, the vast machine?
 "Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?
 "Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark pro-
 "found,
 "Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew,

 "And set the bosom of *old night* on fire."

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

The *answer* is a strain equally lofty.

——He, whose potent word,
 Like the loud trumpet, levy'd first their powers
 In night's in glorious empire, where they slept
 In beds of darkness: arm'd them with fierce flames,
 Arrang'd, and disciplin'd, and cloath'd in gold.

But sufficient of extract; the remainder of this, my last Epistle, shall be engaged in shewing you some *slips* in the *Consolation*; slips, which are however never excus'd by the world, to a man of Dr. Young's genius. *Warn'd*, Archibald, *beware!* I shall be obliged now to write
 miscel-

miscellaneously ; reviewing the book, and marking an error, where I find it without length of quotation. I once more mark our Author's hackneying a word, and that a word, even to use at all.

————Deputed conscience scales

The dread tribunal, and *forestalls* our doom ;
Forestalls, and by *forstalling* proves it sure. *

Recounting the wonders of the last day, he says,

All nature, like an earthquake trembling round,
All deities, like *summer's swarms* on wing ;
All *basking* in the full meridan blaze.

This simile of the summer swarm being bad, is among the great errors of composition : The Author means, I suppose, as *thick* as summer swarms ; but that meaning is so faintly *implied*, not *expressed*, that it admits a bald interpretation. Deities, like summer swarms. How insignificant

* Take notice of such an error in Shakespear :

————Many thousand widows,
Shall this his *mock*, *mock* out of their dear husbands ;
Mock mothers from their sons, *mock* castles down. HENRY 5th.

significant! *all basking* too; worse and worse! Can we carry with us the idea of Angels, and yet imagine that on *such* a day they would, like wanton summer swarms, be *basking* in the blaze, by which the world is to be destroyed. Basking is even a word of *luxurious idleness*. †

Young is often defective in harmony, as here,

Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes;

Or here,

The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour.

Once more,

Laborious. 'Tis impracticable quite,

Cutting and clipping words is not well:

Angels *can't* tell me, angels *cannot* guess.

This is to accommodate the measure, but sense and elegance suffer by it.

Coining

† The idea of an angel *basking* on the *last day*, is more preposterous and shocking, than Nero's fiddling while the City of Rome was in conflagration.

Coining words, or even risquing infrequent ones, is as bad.

Monarchs of all elaps'd, or *unarriv'd*.

Again,

Eliminate my spirit, give it range.

Elance thy thought.

An *unadept* in mysteries.

Affords an emblem of *millennial* love,

That *horologe* machinery divine ;

Breeds all that *un-celestial* discord.

——— Shall mysteries descend

From *un-mysterious* ? ———

'Than this call'd *un-miraculous* survey ;

Of subterranean, *excavated* grots.

Mark how the *labyrinthian* turns they take.

Push out its *corrugate*, expansive make,

It is not elegant to use the same word,
(particularly if it be of remarkable kind)
too frequently,

And ne'er *unlock* her resolution more,

And fly through infinite and all *unlock*.

Though

Though I have abjur'd further extract,
yet I cannot avoid finding room for our
Author's fine description of the sun. He
speaks of it as an *evidence* of omnipotence.

Full ample the dominions of the sun !
Full glorious to behold ! how far, how wide,
The matchless monarch, from his flaming throne,
Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,
Farther, and faster, than a thought can fly,
And feeds his planets, with eternal fires !

Here, my young friend, we will bid
adieu to our remarks on *The Night
Thoughts*, having I trust, noticed therein
what will assist your judgement in the de-
lightful study of poetical composition.

I am,

Dear Archibald,

Your ever affectionate,

And obedient

T H E E N D



I N D E X.

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Page's examination of

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...the

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Yours truly,
John D. Rockefeller

